

ODYSSEY

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Odyssey

FADE IN:

EXT. LOS ANGELES - NIGHT - ESTABLISHING

Downtown sparkles.

EXT. STREETS OF DOWNTOWN LA - NIGHT

A custom silver-painted BMW M1000R motorcycle screams through traffic, its RIDER in full tuxedo. The rider is helmeted, face concealed.

SUPER: LOS ANGELES

Several daring turns and professional skids get the attention of just about everyone along the way.

SUPER: DAY ONE

EXT. WESTIN BONAVENTURE HOTEL - NIGHT

Against a Los Angeles skyline, limos and ELEGANT FOLK congest the area as the M1000 flies to the valet, skids to a stop.

Attendants approach. The rider removes his helmet, revealing JONATHAN BRAND, 52, strong, charismatic, boyish good looks. His bow tie is crooked. He hands off the helmet.

VALET

Evening, Mr. Brand. You're late.

BRAND

Think they'll notice?

VALET

(chuckles)

Probably, yes.

Brand slips the valet a Franklin, pats him on the back, walks briskly to the hotel entrance.

INT. BONAVENTURE LOBBY

Jonathan weaves his way through the crowded cement lobby. A few BYSTANDERS notice him, do a double-take.

INT. BONAVENTURE - CATALINA BALLROOM

An elegant hall.

Brand enters, hesitant. He eyes the super-dressed international crowd of 500, sitting at large tables cluttered with champagne glasses and the remains of a catered meal.

Another tuxedoed man, DR. LATHAM BROWN, 60, approaches a microphone podium at the front of the hall. He taps the mike, clears his throat. Flash strobes ignite randomly from a cadre of PRESS PEOPLE nearby.

Above the stage is a huge banner which reads *GLOBAL LEGION OF HUMANITARIAN ARTS AND SCIENCES*.

LATHAM
(into mike)
Hello again. Okay, so tonight I've
had the honor to present the
highest Community and World Service
Awards to some absolutely
extraordinary individuals.

At a table in front of the podium sits DR. BRETT GABRIEL, 29, a dashing Black male with a tight goatee. There's an empty chair beside him. Brett scans the room, checks his watch, shakes his head.

LATHAM (CONT'D)
Join me now in welcoming the
honorable Governor Tracy...

Several in the audience AD LIB whispers as they notice an uncomfortable Brand in the back of the room, still with a crooked bow tie.

LATHAM (CONT'D)
...who will introduce this year's
Platinum Laurel recipient.
Governor?

Brett sees Brand across the audience. He taps his watch, Brand shrugs.

A rugged Black man, GOVERNOR TRACY, 56, stands from a seat at the Brett Gabriel table. He takes the podium to applause. Brand claps along, looks at Brett who applauds and whistles, gives Brand a friendly wink.

GOVERNOR
Thanks, folks. Thank you.
(adjusts the mike)
(MORE)

GOVERNOR (CONT'D)

The Platinum Laurel is the ultimate recognition of selfless achievement, and this year's distinguished gentleman is certainly no mystery. Except ...well, that he's not in the building. I—

Brett does a "Psst!" to the Governor, points over the crowd to Brand.

GOVERNOR (CONT'D)

Ah! There he is. C'mon over, Jon!

The crowd turns, sees Brand embarrassed. There's applause as Brand comes down and takes his place beside Brett.

GOVERNOR (CONT'D)

Hey, Jon? Up here.

The audience laughs a bit, good-natured. Brand smiles, again embarrassed. As he stands he bumps the table and tips his water glass. He tries to catch it, but it empties and rolls to the floor.

Brett gets the glass. Applause and laughter ramps-up as Brand composes, walks to the stage.

At the podium Brand shakes the Governor's hand, who returns with a double-shake. Brand doesn't quite know what to do, and attempts to take the mike.

GOVERNOR (CONT'D)

Hey, just a minute! I gotta brag about you, first!

There's laughter again as Brand smiles, gives an awkward wave to the audience. He steps back.

ANGLE OF: MAN IN AUDIENCE

...also in black-tie. He's of light-complexion and AD LIBS a Scandinavian language into a walkie-talkie the size of a lighter. He never looks away from Brand.

BACK TO SCENE:

GOVERNOR (CONT'D)

Okay, now. As I was saying, this year's recipient is a self-made man who's put one hell of a lot into making this world a better place for all of us. We could learn a lesson or two from the fella.

(MORE)

GOVERNOR (CONT'D)

And he couldn't be a nicer guy. So with that I give you Mr. Jonathan Brand, this year's Platinum Laurel.

Brett jumps to his feet in applause. With crooked bow tie, Jonathan steps to the podium. He smiles, warm but shy.

An attractive HOSTESS delivers the Platinum Award to the stage, a haunting statuette of a faceless, spectral figure holding a crown of laurel leaves. Hostess nicely corrects Brand's bowtie, to laughter and more applause, then exits.

Brand is nervous. He takes the mike.

BRAND

Many of you—

Feedback! He tries again.

BRAND (CONT'D)

Many of you in this room deserve this award, as well. I'm deeply honored. Thank you.

Applause. He clears his throat, takes a breath.

BRAND (CONT'D)

Since I was a boy, I've always dreamed of giving something to the world that would make a difference in everyone's life. No matter where they live. Or who they are. My efforts have been small chips off a huge stone, really. But tonight I have news that may help smash that stone forever.

A few puzzled voices from the audience.

BRAND (CONT'D)

Sitting at the table in front of me is Dr. Brett Gabriel, head of Neuro-Physics at Brand Enterprises. Brett is the visionary in charge of a project which, if successful, will produce genetic code paradigms that will bring a complete end to all disease— cancer, diabetes, even the common cold. Forever. Without medicine or surgery. He's a genius, and a good friend. Why don't you stand up, Brett.

Over applause, Brett stands, waves.

There's a wolf-whistle from the audience, then laughter.
Brett sits down.

BRAND (CONT'D)

I think Brett's gonna kill me,
because we weren't scheduled for
this announcement for at least
another...I guess six months. But I
wanted to share the good news with
you now, because it *is* good news.

Applause. The light-haired man narrows his eyes.

BRAND (CONT'D)

We must keep in mind, however, that
technology alone will not save us
from ourselves.

Another slight feedback blast. Brand shrugs, continues.

BRAND (CONT'D)

Homo sapiens must have a change of
heart for real change to occur.
Somehow moving away from sheer
survival and its impulse. Brett's
machine will not do this. Frankly,
I'm not sure what will. But, I'm
hopeful. Very hopeful. Again, my
deepest thanks for this
recognition. Thank you.

As the room stands in ovation, the light-haired man speaks
briefly into his walkie, gets up from his table and leaves.

CUT TO:

EXT. SAN FRANCISCO INT'L AIRPORT - NIGHT

A pearl white Boom "Mozart" supersonic 10-seat corporate jet
touches down from darkness. Small BRAND ENTERPRISES logos
mark body and wings.

EXT. STREETS OF SAN FRANCISCO - NIGHT

SUPER: SAN FRANCISCO, 1:37 AM

A sleek, blackout armored VR7+ Klassen SUV rumbles down a
relatively deserted San Francisco surface street.

INT. VR7 SUV - NIGHT

Brand drives. He and Brett are still in their tuxes, bowties undone, jackets relaxed.

BRETT
Let's get a pizza.

BRAND
Kinda late. You buyin'?

BRETT
Yeah, I was gonna put it on my
Brand Enterprises corporate card.

Brand smiles.

BRAND
How 'bout some olives, cheese, a
few onions, and I'll make us a *real*
pizza. On the house.

BRETT
You gonna spin dough in the air and
do all that?

BRAND
We heard from the airport people.

Brett's brows raise.

BRETT
Uh, oh.

BRAND
Yeah, they say dad flew out alone,
so that kills the kidnap theory.

BRETT
It's not cool, Jon, I'm sorry.
Every time Benjamin pulls this
shit, you stress. Ain't right.
Besides, how the hell does he keep
that old plane in the air, anyway?

BRAND
Hey, it did fine in World War II,
right? Soon as the whiskey runs
out, believe me, we'll hear him.
(beat)
So now that half the planet knows
what you're working on, they gonna
call me a kook in six months, or
what?

BRETT
We're close now, Jon. Damn. In fact, the primary run is tomorrow afternoon. Real deal, my man.

A cellular rings. Jon reaches, but Brett intercepts.

BRETT (CONT'D)
Jonathan Brand's Pizzeria: We Throw the Dough and Give You Mo'.

Brand frowns painfully, shakes his head.

BRETT (CONT'D)
Yep. Pete! Hey, buddy! Sure, hold on a sec.
(to Brand)
Pete Goodman.

BRAND
Hey, Pete, how are ya?
(beat)
Antarctica? Wow. Nineteen hours difference. Yes. Okay. Yes.

He motions quickly to Brett for writing materials.

BRAND (CONT'D)
Coordinates?

Brett hands Jonathan a pad and pen. He scribbles.

BRAND (CONT'D)
We've got a research vessel down there, somewhere. Perfect. Have them set a base camp close as they can. I'll see you...ten hours or so. Supersonic, remember?
(beat)
Earthquake? Jesus. Okay. Shouldn't be a problem. I hope. Thanks, Pete!

Brand hangs up, eyes filled with concern.

BRETT
They found his plane, didn't they?

BRAND
No, but they know where it is.

BRETT
Antarctica?

BRAND
Supposedly. I'm going down there.

BRETT
He must've had a wild reason, man.

BRAND
Maybe he finally found what he was looking for.

BRETT
No way that thing exists.

BRAND
Probably true. But what if it does?

BRETT
C'mon.

BRAND
What if it does?

BRETT
At the South Pole.

BRAND
Gotta be *somewhere*. And they're not at the pole all the way, anyhow.

BRETT
Wow.

EXT. STREET OF SAN FRANCISCO - NIGHT

Brand's Klassen SUV on a hill near the Golden Gate.

Standing in the dark WE SEE the light-haired man from the awards ceremony. He speaks into his walkie, motions to a pair of white GMC Yukons with ultratint windows.

They roar after Brand.

INT. SUV

Cellular rings. Brand gets it, this time on hands-free.

BRAND
Jonathan Brand.

VOICE
 (V.O. - Scandinavian
 accent)
 Yes, "Mr." Brand. How are you?

BRAND
 I'm sorry, I don't—

VOICE
 (V.O.)
 Bangladesh, 2012. Ring a bell?

Brand suddenly realizes.

BRAND
Grähm. How the *hell* did you find
 this number?

GRÄHM
 (V.O.)
 The same way I know you received
 your Platinum Laurel tonight, but
 not before tipping the water glass.

EXT. ROOFTOP - DAWN - INTERCUTS

SHARP-FEATURED MAN, 55, with cruel good looks and dirty-
 blonde hair. This is Grähm-- on a cellular, sipping coffee.

BRAND
 (V.O.)
 Listen, Grähm, you chased dad
 around thirty years, for nothing.
 Get a life! What he wanted doesn't
 even exist. Are you *that* stupid?

GRÄHM
 Okay, I'll come to the point.

Grähm stands. He wears a full-length cashmere trench and
 accompanying scarf, both black. He walks forward to...

EXT. FJÖRD - DAWN

Sunlight streams through haunted cloud and onto a
 breathtaking expanse of vertical canyons.

SUPER: ICELAND

Grähm is on the roof of a castle, high in the fjörd.

GRÄHM

The artifact, Jon. I want it. I'm sure father had it when he fled from Chile. In that antiquated Beechcraft airplane, of course.

BRAND

Artifact? C'mon.

GRÄHM

Yes. Now, in exchange for the item, I'm prepared to donate a substantial cache of stocks and certificates to a charity of your choice. Or, we can simply make war. Yet again. The decision is yours.

BRAND

You're lost in a buncha wild conspiracy stuff. Just give it up.

GRÄHM

As you know, I had very little as a boy and was whipped constantly. When you tell me lies, I am again that little boy being whipped. Are we communicating?

BRAND

Have we ever?

Grähm sighs.

GRÄHM

Let me remind you of something, Jonathan. Benjamin, like me, is a very hard man to track. But you...you're quite a public figure. Easy to get to.

Grähm kills the cell call, puts the phone in his trench. He cradles his coffee in both hands, sips gingerly. When finished, Grähm tosses his cup over the castle precipice, then walks away.

A murder of crows mass upward from the cup's drop.

INT. VR7 SUV - NIGHT

Brand hangs-up the cell.

BRETT

Hell, naw! Grähm? I thought that psycho Aryan bastard disappeared with a Cold War cigarette.

BRAND

When there's money to be made, people will do anything.

BRETT

This is why your dad lived like a damned nomad? And you didn't say?

BRAND

All I care about is finding dad. If he's alive, maybe I can get him to drop this artifact nonsense and come home.

EXT. VR7 SUV

The white GMC Yukons pull into the lane beside Brand, windows down. Inside each are four BLONDE MEN, well dressed. They look over with blank expressions. The men in the back seats are heavily armed.

INT. VR7 SUV

Brand and Brett examine the Yukons.

BRAND

Hm. Hold on.

EXT. STREETS

Brand locks the brakes, the pursuing Yukons streak past. One Yukon splits away, shoots up an alley. Brand zips the opposite direction. The other Yukon makes quick pursuit.

INT. VR7 SUV

BRAND

I don't know who's chasing who.

BRETT

Got some rockets?

BRAND

Right. I really want that pizza, though. Hold on.

EXT. STREETS

The Yukon that split from the other hauls in front of Brand. Brand brakes, the VR7 slides sideways, broadsides the Yukon.

Immediately the Yukon's backseat GUNMEN open fire with automatic weapons, all of them fully silenced. The bullets strafe the VR7, and do virtually nothing.

Brand floors it, but now the other Yukon has him sandwiched, and they too open-up. Silenced gunfire rains hard.

The VR7 takes a shredding, but it's superficial: windows are totally bulletproof, as are the tires, body moldings, roof.

INT. VR7

BRETT

Damn. Did they even hit us?

BRAND

Bulletproof. Hold on.

EXT. INDUSTRIAL AREA

Brand backs up an alley with the two Yukons coming right at him. He turns sharp, exits, dumps into...

EXT. FISH PLANT

Wrong turn.

Brand skids to a dead end near a fish cleaning factory. The Yukons careen to avoid collision. They do 360s and stop.

Brand pulls away, the trucks chase, get ahead.

The gunmen duck...except for one, who now carries some kind of mechanical device. The Yukon lurches, scoots right beside the VR7.

The gunman thrusts outward, attaches the mechanical device with a military-grade suction mount to the VR7's driver-side windshield. The white Yukons make a turn, drive away into the night. Brand's VR7 flies forward.

INT. VR7

The device on the windshield is metallic, the size of a donut with a bright-red LED.

The VR7 screeches to a halt. The explosive on the windshield goes off, a brilliant blast that does zero but streak glass.

INT. VR7

Brand and Brett just kind of sit there.

BRETT
Good thing you drive a Got-damned tank, baby.

BRAND
Yeah, that was fun. I think. Guess we should figure it out.

BRETT
Grähm? Had to be.

BRAND
Hm. Let's get the pizza. And then I got a flight to make.

They drive off.

EXT. LONDON CITYSCAPE - LATE AFTERNOON - ESTABLISHING

EXT. EAST END CLUB ROW

SUPER: LONDON, ENGLAND

A ragged side of the city, framed by drifting club tunes. A black and grey Range Rover SE pulls to the curb.

INT. ROVER

SUPER: DAY TWO

At the wheel is an attractive US woman, PROFESSOR REBECCA PENN, 35, a smartly dressed brunette, looks like Kim Cattrall from 1991.

A cellular rings as she hurries to exit. Frustrated, she cues the hands-free switch, answers.

REBECCA
Yes, Professor Penn here.

Nothing.

REBECCA (CONT'D)
Rebecca Penn, hellooo...? Brett, if
you're messing with me again...

Semi-disgusted, she hangs up, gathers her briefcase, exits.

ANGLE OF: WHITE MERCEDES DELIVERY VAN

...across the street. Inside sit two light-haired EUROPEAN
MEN in dark suits. They watch Rebecca enter a stairwell
between two clubs.

INT. STAIRWELL

Rebecca steps up, moves toward a door on the second level.
She has her iPhone in hand, checks it, looks around.

A couple PUNKERS gather at the bottom of the stairwell. One
of them sees her.

PUNKER
(Cockney)
Hey, birdy! Give us the arse, eh?

Rebecca flips him the finger.

REBECCA
Here's your bird, boot boy.

The Punkers "Ooh" and "Ahh". They move on, laughing. Rebecca
turns and bangs on a door, which is quickly answered by...

DR. JOSEPH BHODAL, a short, trim-bearded East Indian gent of
blue turban and double-breasted suit.

JOSEPH
(Mumbai accent)
Ah, the Dame of Archeology! Yes,
come in, come in.

Rebecca enters an absolutely immaculate flat.

REBECCA
Nice to see you again, Doctor.

JOSEPH
Come, sit down. Chai? *Authentic*
chai, of course.

REBECCA
I'm on this low-caffeine thing.

JOSEPH
Too bad. Vodka martini?

REBECCA
Sold.

Bhodal goes to the bar, mixes Rebecca a martini and himself straight gin. In the b.g. is a room filled with charts, strange banners (with ancient hieroglyphs), and cubicles.

Nearby on a credenza is a suite of pictures, one of which has Joseph's family— three girls, a boy, and a pleasant-looking woman, his wife.

REBECCA (CONT'D)
Your kids are growing.

JOSEPH
New clothes all the time. I don't like being away from them, you know. But, business is business.

They move to a dining table, sit.

JOSEPH (CONT'D)
So. What's the emergency? Or did Jonathan Brand drop his bonnet?

She finds it amusing, then leans in.

REBECCA
If I needed a person who could translate the world's oldest written language, virtually at a glance, where do you suppose I'd have to go?

JOSEPH
Wheel of Fortune?

REBECCA
You still get that over here?

JOSEPH
Hah! Well, he would have to be very handsome, a real looker. Hmmm. I guess that narrows it to *me*.

REBECCA
(laughs)
Exactly.

JOSEPH

So you flew all the way to London for this? You must be every bit as obsessive as they say.

REBECCA

Oh? And who's "they"?

JOSEPH

Brett Gabriel has described you in this manner.

REBECCA

That little... What I need you to look at isn't here. It's quite far away, actually.

JOSEPH

Ah. I smell Jonathan's father in here, someplace.

REBECCA

Doctor, this is not to leave the room. Got it?

(he nods)

We think Jon's father may have found the artifact.

JOSEPH

(stunned)

Come, now! Where? How?

REBECCA

South America. The centerpiece of a temple in Chile, to be exact. Its walls are covered with star maps at least thirty-million years old. They even show the Milky Way. As seen from the *other* side.

(beat)

Off-world stuff, doctor. For sure.

JOSEPH

Fantastic.

Joseph looks a little dizzy. He stands, walks to a wet bar, pours himself another gin.

JOSEPH (CONT'D)

How did the old man find this place? It rings no bells.

Rebecca puts a hand in her suit, produces a small, clear packet with a shiny coin inside.

JOSEPH (CONT'D)
Roman Denarius. Romans in South
America, eh?

REBECCA
I'll tell you all about it. Later.

Bhodal comes back, drinks.

REBECCA (CONT'D)
The centerpiece was removed from
the temple a long time ago, so
that's a dead issue. But Ben may
have known where it was taken. And
it may have done him in.

JOSEPH
Where's the old man, now?

REBECCA
About twelve hours ago his plane
was confirmed missing on or near
Alexander Island. Antarctica.

JOSEPH
This is the place nearest to Chile
and Argentina, yes?
(Rebecca nods)
I see. I'm very sorry to hear it.
Poor bastard. Rebecca, the missing
centerpiece: What do you think it
to be?

REBECCA
History. And, like the temple
charts, proof of life elsewhere.

JOSEPH
What did the old man say?

REBECCA
That the centerpiece is an off-
world weapon of some kind. Insanely
powerful. But there's no proof of
that. And no reason for it to be a
weapon. More like...nonsense he
made up.

JOSEPH
(smiles)
Maybe his own ruse. To scare us.
Here, let me fetch something.

Bhodal walks to his work area, fumbles around in the dark. Something crashes to the floor, he curses.

He returns to the table with a large leather-bound journal. He opens the tome, flips back and forth until he finds what he's looking for.

He points.

ANGLE OF: PICTURE OF AN EXCAVATION—

Bhodal is there with Jon's father, Benjamin Brand. Both their images are clearly labeled. The location is an unknown cavern where they stand before a black, seven-sided column, twice their height.

BACK TO SCENE:

REBECCA

Wow.

JOSEPH

Yes. Besides your Chile temple, this is the best kept secret on earth. We called it the Cassapal Monolith. Found on the island of Malta in the Mediterranean, 1997. The chamber was disturbed, and some items missing. Egyptian robbers, most likely.

REBECCA

I see.

JOSEPH

Only four living people know of the monolith. Myself, Benjamin, Grähm. And you. Inscriptions, as I'm sure you know, are Sumerian Cuneiforms.

REBECCA

Wow. Oldest written human language. Sadly I know little. I always focused on the Egyptian side.

JOSEPH

And you are the best!

(beat)

Mostly the column has descriptions of land and stars. In a way, like a riddle. Never had time to examine it closely.

REBECCA

I'm breathless, Joseph. Really.
(leans close to the photo)
The column looks seven-sided. How
old is it?

JOSEPH

We used fission track radiometric
dating. The age was determined as
thirty-million years.

REBECCA

Wait. Then why Sumerian language?
That was only...fifty-two hundred
years ago. Ish.

JOSEPH

Yes, it would seem the Sumers
eventually used it as their own.
Perhaps from finding it, or having
it brought to them, somehow. With a
few changes too, of course.

REBECCA

And where is the column now?

JOSEPH

The column was stolen. By unknown
thieves. Not been seen for decades.
It remains unspoken. Too "far out".

REBECCA

Hold that thought... Okay, so...if
the centerpiece in Chile wasn't a
weapon, then what exactly was
Benjamin looking for?

JOSEPH

A map.
(leans close)
A map to heaven.

Rebecca scrunches her face.

REBECCA

C'mon.

JOSEPH

Hey, I am just the messenger. True,
heaven was not involved, but some
of the men—sorry, only men on this
one—some of them made heaven the
map's unexplained destination.

REBECCA

And someone other than Jon's father
found it and took it away.

JOSEPH

Long ago. Probably your Romans.

Joseph leans close, whispering very quietly.

JOSEPH (CONT'D)

Whatever the case, you must not
allow Grähm to obtain it.

REBECCA

(whispers back)

Doctor?

JOSEPH

Yes?

REBECCA

Why are we whispering?

Caught in the unexplained act, Joseph snaps-to.

REBECCA (CONT'D)

Come with me. To Chile. Let's
translate the temple and solve
this. You'll find yourself well
compensated, of course.

JOSEPH

Let me gather some things.

REBECCA

Great. I'll be back in...two hours.

JOSEPH

That will be fine. And after that I
want to hear all about the
mysterious Romans!

Rebecca shakes his hand, exits. Joseph closes the door behind
her, stands for a long moment staring at it.

EXT. GLACIAL MAJESTY - DAY

SUPER: ANTARCTICA - ALEXANDER ISLAND

Expansive snowfields surround Antarctica's Terrapin Hill on
Alexander Island. Blue ice, dormant volcanoes, exposed peaks.

Against the desolate sprawl is Jonathan Brand. Warmly dressed, he scans the terrain with high-powered binoculars, pulls a small bourbon flask and draws a swig.

A low-flying Airbus H145 helicopter streaks into the solitude, BRAND ENTERPRISES on each shank. The chopper banks sharp, swings from view.

Brand checks his watch, trudges along a ridge to...

EXT. BASE CAMP - DAY

SUPER: DAY THREE

Personnel scurry among communication rigs and reflective shelters. Long-track Polaris snowmobiles grumble.

EXT. WATERING HOLE - DAY

A portable coffee service. Several technicians drink and chat. They quiet as Brand arrives.

BRAND
Afternoon, gentlemen.

An AD LIB chorus of "Afternoon, Mr. Brand". Jonathan moves to the coffee, pours a cup.

The scene is suddenly shaken by an earth tremor. Shelters sway, snow stirs, the coffee service rocks and bounces. And then, it's gone.

PETE
(O.S.)
Just be glad we weren't here for
the eight-point-oh.

A big man, PETE GOODMAN, 39, approaches Brand. Pete's parka has his name and CHIEF OF NATURAL RESEARCH.

BRAND
Hey, Pete! Anything good?

PETE
Not a trace, sir. If your father
made it this far, then he probably
went down where the ice is flatter.
We're checking the quadrant now.

ASIAN TECH
(O.S.)
Mr. Brand!

An ASIAN TECH rushes up. This is Eddie, 26, a handsome Chinese fellow.

EDDIE

Sir, we've got something large and metallic. Four kilometers east.

He hands a topographic readout. Brand and Pete check it.

PETE

I knew it!

BRAND

The crew ready?

EDDIE

Yessir, but they're concerned about all the seismic activity.

Brand studies the readout.

BRAND

Well, let's do it.

PETE

(yells)

Let's go, people!

Brand walks amid voices and engines to the camp's edge. He pulls his pocket flask, takes a swig, stares to the horizon.

Above faraway mountains comes the spectre of a storm.

EXT. ARCTIC WASTES - DAY

A chopper slices the scene. Several snowmobiles scream through, flanking a large A8 Hivus-10 arctic hovercraft. All vehicles have subtle Brand logos.

INT. A8 HOVERCRAFT COCKPIT - DAY

Pete and Eddie pilot the craft, check scanners. Brand sits behind them at a tactical scope.

EDDIE

Almost there, sir.

BRAND

I see it. Good work, guys. Beer's on me. Later, of course.

EXT. ARCTIC

The Hivus hovercraft veers toward the base of a ridge.
Snowmobiles keep pace.

INT. HOVERCRAFT

Brand turns from the tactical scope, comes forward and looks
through the canopy. Visibility is poor.

BRAND
(in headset)
Chuck? Are we close?

INT. H145 HELICOPTER

The veteran pilot, CHUCK, 47, rocks with the chopper.

He scans the icescape. The eerie form of a wrecked twin-
engine Beechcraft Model 18 is below and ahead, obscured by
distance and flying snow.

CHUCK
Yes, definitely something ahead...
whoa, Sonny Jesus! Full stop!

INT. HOVERCRAFT

CHUCK
(V.O.)
Emergency, full stop!

The hovercraft and snowmobiles brake hard, everybody grabs.

BRAND
What happened, Chuck?

CHUCK
(V.O.)
Serious hole here, sir.

EXT. ARCTIC LANDSCAPE

Below the chopper is a huge crevasse. Very long, very wide.
Snow breaks from sheer edges, falls into gloom. The wrecked
Benjamin Brand airplane is on the opposite side.

INT. HOVERCRAFT

BRAND
Crevasse?

PETE
(checks scope)
Jeez, you ain't kiddin'! It's
probably half a mile deep and ten
times as long. Came outta nowhere!

BRAND
Is that possible?

CHUCK
(V.O.)
Generally, no. But the plane's
here. Area looks totally unstable.
Weather's goin' south, too. We're
gonna get hammered pretty soon.

Brand sits back, quietly frustrated. He taps the headset.

BRAND
Set her down next to us, Chuck.

Brand moves out.

EXT. SNOW NEXT TO HOVERCRAFT

The chopper lands, Brand and Eddie run over. Jonathan opens the cockpit, pats Chuck on the shoulder.

BRAND
Take a break, Chuck.

Chuck exits, Brand slides into the pilot's seat.

BRAND (CONT'D)
(to Eddie)
If the weather gets worse, get
everybody outta here!

Brand slams the door, gears-up.

CHUCK
Sir, it's really not safe!

The helicopter takes off through the growing blizzard.

INT. H145 COCKPIT

Brand guides the copter through the storm. Wind plays hell, but he handles it. He observes the crevasse ahead and below. A frightening gash.

He cruises over. Parallel to the chasm is a trail left by the Model 18's landing. The plane is there, a silent derelict.

And it's dangerously close to the crevasse.

Brand wrangles the chopper to a landing near his father's plane, kills it. Weather whipping, he exits, carries a coil of climbing rope. He lashes one end to the chopper runner, ties the other around his waist.

He shambles forward, moves carefully toward the twin-engine Beechcraft. It's canted to one side, left landing strut destroyed. But the plane is otherwise fully intact.

PETE

(V.O.)

Sir, you okay?

BRAND

Rigged a lifeline. Having a look.

Brand moves to the cockpit window. A frosty pane reveals nothing. He scrapes the ice away. Inside are charts, maps, coffee cups, a few whiskey bottles, and various gear.

BRAND (CONT'D)

Not here. I'll check around. Don't wait for me if the storm goes! I can hide in the chopper.

Holding the lifeline tight, Brand goes to the mouth of the nearby chasm. He pulls a widescreen LED flashlight from his utility belt, shines into the gap. Nothing.

A rumble. The chasm expands nearby, snow and ice fall in.

BRAND (CONT'D)

Dad?! It's Jon! C'mon, now!

Brand surveys. He trudges a few feet, sees an ice piton firmly embedded. Attached is a climbing rope, similar to the one he's using. It drops into the crevasse.

BRAND (CONT'D)

Jesus. Guys, it looks like he's in the crevasse somewhere. We better fly the Skycrane out later and drop a harness.

PETE

(V.O.)

Sir, we should really pull out til
the weather clears.

BRAND

(pauses a beat)

Agreed. You guys get back to base.
I'll have one last look.

A rumble heralds another quake. The crevasse disintegrates nearby. Another rumble, the crevasse moves forward.

Brand freezes, steps back. Rumble. Brand turns to dash...

...but the crevasse opens beneath him!

Brand plummets down, through a shower of cold. The lifeline catches hard. He dangles.

He looks below: deep darkness. He looks up: the rope holds, caught on jagged ice...which cuts the fibre.

Brand gropes for an ice axe on his belt. He pulls it free, slices at the wall, misses, slices...

A hit. Straining for a handhold he inches upward, but...

BRAND (CONT'D)

Oh, shhh—!

The axe gives way. Brand falls backward, his weight shears the rope clean. He slides, claws hard.

Down the crevasse he goes.

INT. DEEP CREVASSE

Brand hits an ice flume which breaks the fall, then speeds him deep through cobwebs of ice. Farther down he goes.

Freefall, and then another chute. He slides until he hits hard on a ledge bordering black void. He sprawls unconscious.

INT. HOVERCRAFT

PETE

Jon! Jon!

(into headset)

Get a rescue team out here, now!

EXT. GRÄHM'S CASTLE - DAWN - ESTABLISHING

INT. GRÄHM'S CHAMBERS

A monstrous picture window, perhaps three stories high, delivers a gorgeous panorama of fjörds and sunlight to a room of incredible size. A fire burns in a large hearth, casting a chaos of shadows.

On walls otherwise dark, massive HDTV screens are alive. Eight in all, they carry a silent cyclorama of global news, weather, politics.

Grähm is here, silently and slowly practicing Kendo, the Japanese art of swordsmanship. He batters a practice dummy with powerful swings of great discipline. His dummy sword klacks loudly.

Grähm stops, bows to the picture window and its glory. He retires near the hearth, to a couch where a small black Labrador puppy sits. The puppy crawls eagerly to Grähm's lap, and he pets the animal.

In the b.g. is the Cassapal Monolith, lit by the white ray of a singular gallery light.

Grähm scans a HDTV tube, ups the volume while dragging a cigarette. He studies a military skirmish. The language is perhaps Swahili.

He turns and checks a commodities table. He glances back to the warfare, and then to a newscast: PAN-AFRICAN PEACE TALKS COMMENCE. Grähm is emotionless. He hits an intercom button.

GRÄHM

Vincent? Come see me, please.

Grähm continues to smoke his cigarette, moves to a concealed wet bar beside the burning hearth. He rustles some bottles, pours himself an aged Macallan scotch, neat.

A double-door sized wall slides open in the b.g., revealing castle hallways and four figures. The first is VINCENT, a balding, bespectacled man. At Vincent's right and left are two GUARDS, large Aryan fellows, suited.

The last man is an AIDE, 28. He and the guards stay back as Vincent approaches. Grähm continues to study the monitors.

GRÄHM (CONT'D)

The American ambassador to Kenya...
I'd like her eliminated, please.

Vincent nods to the aide, who makes a note.

GRÄHM (CONT'D)
Any news on Benjamin Brand?

VINCENT
Nothing, sir. Jonathan Brand seems
no better informed than we are.

GRÄHM
They've found it, Vincent. Or they
will. And we'll be there, too.
(beat)
Prepare my plane for flight to San
Francisco. I want a tactical team
in the Bay Area, Code Emerald.

VINCENT
Emerald, sir? Mr. Brand is hardly a
military target.

GRÄHM
(walks away)
I'll be ready within the hour.

Vincent glances nervously at the group. They all exit.

The double-doors close, leaving Grähm to himself. He crushes-
out his cigarette, kills the HDTV screens and sits in near
darkness. He drinks.

GRÄHM (CONT'D)
Like father like son, Jonathan.

EXT. ANTARCTIC - DAY - EST.

The storm has passed.

INT. HOVERCRAFT

Eddie tries the radio.

EDDIE
Mr. Brand? Jon, can you hear us?

INT. DEEP CREVASSE - DAY

Jonathan Brand, unconscious.

EDDIE

(V.O.)

Mr. Brand?

Brand lies in a pocket of the crevasse, a place like an expansive, one-sided ice cave. Filtered sunlight penetrates the frozen tonnage, creating a muted glow.

Brand's on a tiny swath of rock near the edge of nothingness. His eyes flutter open. He's alert, doesn't move. He scans about, tests the ground, peers over the ledge.

BRAND

Lordy.

EDDIE

(V.O.)

Mr. Brand?!

BRAND

Afternoon, boys.

EDDIE

(V.O.)

Guys! I've got him! Sir, you okay?

BRAND

Yeah, but I insist you join me.

PETE

(V.O.)

We're assembling a team now.

BRAND

Make damn sure nobody gets hurt.

PETE

(V.O.)

We'll be on our tip-toes.

Brand grabs his widescreen LED flashlight. It still works. He shines about, shifts to a better vantage, does a thorough visual scan of the place. It's truly beautiful here.

BRAND

Dad?! You down here?! It's Jon.

Hope you got a fire goin'.

Jonathan bumps something. He turns around, swings his flashbeam into a withered, horrible face...smiling painful through a death that was long, long ago.

This was once a Roman warrior, his 1st-century BC partial battle armor still flawless.

BRAND (CONT'D)
Hail Caesar.

Brand catches something in the corner of his eye. He lifts the light, probes across the crevasse. High on the other side is a sight that brings instant awe.

Half-fused to the wall of the giant ice cave is the 150' bulk of an ancient Roman trireme warship. With oars broken yet relatively intact, its painted patterns and decoration look near new. A splintery mast spans the crevasse above.

Brand sits on the ledge, amazed. He shakes his head, laughs.

BRAND (CONT'D)
(into radio)
Hey, Pete? Wait til you see this.

Brand pulls his flask, unscrews. He toasts, swigs, grimaces. He offers the flask to the corpse.

BRAND (CONT'D)
Thirsty?

Brand shrugs, puts the flask away, stands.

PETE
(V.O.)
Something good?

BRAND
Oh, yes.
(to the crevasse)
Okay, dad, you were right! Now come on out and let's get warm.

Nothing.

Brand walks to the fallen mast, raps it with a balled fist. Solid. He mounts the timber and walks across, cautious. When halfway, the mast creaks and gives a little. He continues.

Brand makes it to the ship, grabs a railing, pulls himself up. The ship provides solid but slippery, canted footing. He slides a little, grabs hold, then sees his fears:

His wide flashbeam traces ice on the slanted deck before him: Deep, desperate abrasions, the struggle of someone who fell, slipped down, down, crashing through ancient rails...

...into the void gullet of the chasm. We see a ripped, icy parka, caught firm by the broken rail.

BRAND (CONT'D)

Aw, dad.

Brand sits, stares at the sinister groove.

BRAND (CONT'D)

Guys? Dad is gone. Looks like he slipped and fell.

PETE

(V.O.)

Jon, are you sure? Did you—?

BRAND

If the fall didn't kill him, the cold did. No doubt.

Couple beats.

PETE

(V.O.)

I'm very sorry, sir.

BRAND

I'm gonna look around a little more. Not much we can do now.

Brand stares at the gouges, shakes his head. He sits in thought a few long beats, then he stands carefully, scanning the ship. He moves into the rowing section, and then to the quartermaster's area.

The vessel is a monument of preservation, snowy and icy but colorful and clean. Brand finds a small stairway, drops to a lower deck. He's surprised by another frozen Roman corpse.

BRAND (CONT'D)

Pardon.

EXT. CREVASSE - DAY

A red Sikorsky S-64 Skycrane helicopter flies an arc, moves into position above.

INT. HOVERCRAFT

PETE

(on walkie)

Alright, Eddie, drop the fisherman.

From the Skycrane, a lone FIGURE drops via cable into the maw, an empty harness hanging beneath him.

INT. DEEP CREVASSE/ROMAN WAR GALLEY

Brand explores, sees nothing. And then he finds an ornate, triangular black hatch on the floor, just slightly larger than a manhole cover and six inches thick all around. Its design is quite non-Roman. Dark and odd.

Brand, excited yet cautious, examines the hatch and finds a clasp. He unlatches, lifts the balanced triangular door, marvels at the bizarre design.

BRAND'S POV - LOWER DECKS

Black. There's a small dark metal ladder going down.

BACK TO SCENE:

Brand goes down the ladder to a polished marble floor.

BRAND

The hell...?

The floor seems completely outside of something in an angled wooden boat. Brand shines his light, it glints off an object.

Brand finds an unbelievable fabrication of black metal, precious elements, unknown runes. Sitting on a chromium easel, the creation is a 5'x5' heptagonal (seven-sided) slate with grids and channels drawn of platinum.

The lines have a rhythm, weaving their way to the center through strange mathematic symbols and texts. There's a middle gem of fabulous multicolored shine.

The flawlessly crafted slate is far and beyond anything Roman. Brand examines the center jewel.

There's a loud BANG from the upper decks. Brand rushes up the ladder, exits the hatch and closes it firm.

FISHERMAN

(O.S., French accent)

Allo! Meester Brand!

Brand rushes atop. Ice and debris now litter the deck. The French fisherman emerges 15' above. He sees the warship.

FISHERMAN (CONT'D)

Dieu...

BRAND

(French, subtitled)

I've found something!

FISHERMAN
(French, subtitled)
Yes, I see!

The chasm suddenly shudders with yet another quake. The Roman ship loosens, the rumbling stops.

FISHERMAN (CONT'D)
Quickly, sir!

Brand dashes below, to the discovered hatch. He scratches his head, sees additional Roman corpses nearby.

BRAND
You guys wanna give me a hand?

The corpses stare. Brand kneels to the triangular hatch cover, opens it. The ladder to darkness is there. He closes the lid, perhaps too hard.

The hatch cover moves. Brand's eyes widen. He pushes the hatch again. It moves farther along the deck, but there's no ladder or hole beneath it!

BRAND (CONT'D)
What the—?

He opens the hatch...the ladder is inside. He closes the hatch, moves it to another spot on the deck, opens again—the ladder is still inside, in the same position.

Brand rubs his eyes. He closes the hatch cover, secures the clasp. He pulls it toward him, upright on its side... But there's no hole in the deck. Brand opens the lid once more. The ladder is inside—

Yet the case stands vertical. The hatch is actually a triangular case, with a transport handle. Brand sits, blind-sided. Somehow, the entire chamber he visited *is inside the manhole-sized case*.

BRAND (CONT'D)
Oh, boy.

FISHERMAN
(O.S.)
We must hurry, eh?

Brand grabs the case, sprints upward. He quickly notices that the case weighs almost nothing.

The chasm lurches with a deafening rumble. Snow and ice fall. Brand moves toward the fisherman, the Skycrane's extra harness slightly out of reach.

BRAND
Hell of a time for an earthquake.

FISHERMAN
Take the harness!

Brand tries to hand off the case. The chasm grinds and shudders, snow and ice rain down. The gap widens between them, the harness slips away.

EXT. CREVASSE - DAY

The hovercraft is wracked by a large aftershock. The Beechcraft Model 18 sways crazily, tilts toward the crevasse.

INT. CREVASSE/ROMAN GALLEY

The ship creaks and groans. The crevasse jolts. Not gentle rolling, but a regular rocker.

FISHERMAN
(into radio)
10 feet more!

The walls shimmy, tons of debris collapses inward. Brand's about to lose his footing.

BRAND
Just go!

FISHERMAN
Non!

EXT. CREVASSE

The chasm's edge disappears from beneath the Beechcraft. It flips, drops into the crevasse.

INT. CREVASSE

The Roman warship lurches. The shower of debris suddenly gets thicker as the Beechcraft approaches from above. Brand looks up, see the plane coming.

BRAND
Holy—!

The second harness lowers to his reach, Brand grabs it with one hand and is whisked away as the Beechcraft smashes into the warship...where he was standing a second ago.

The Roman warship dislodges from the ice cave. The aircraft and ancient boat make a balletic roll to the icy void.

INT. CREVASSE

Brand has the case in one hand, harness in the other. He and the Fisherman fire upward. The walls close fast. Battling inertia and the dissolving landscape, they're raked violently against snow and ice, and suddenly...

EXT. CREVASSE & SKY - DAY

Brand and the Fisherman blast from the chasm, safe. Like some great zipper, the entire crevasse closes upon itself, sealed. The landscape shudders in a final spasm.

Brand dangles, twirling. He and the fisherman soar over the snow, toward the hovercraft. Brand spools to the ground.

He waves goodbye to the ascending Frenchman, approaches the hovercraft, case in hand. His men converge, Pete among them.

PETE

Jon! What the hell happened?!

BRAND

I'm fine, Pete. Get the plane ready, and call Rebecca. Get her back to San Francisco right away.

PETE

On it.

(beat)

What about your father, sir?

BRAND

He'll have some peace. Finally.

Pete nods, exits. Brand turns to the vanished crevasse and parked H145, stares, smiles. He sits in snow, pats the case.

EXT. HIGH ALTITUDE SKIES - DAY

Brand's supersonic Boom makes passage.

INT. BOOM - DAY

SUPER: DAY FOUR

Brand uses metal chopsticks on slices of Schezwan fried chicken, near a bank of video screens. There's a green flash on a counter display. Brand hits a button, Rebecca appears on a monitor.

BRAND
There you are.

REBECCA
What the hell's going on, Jon?

BRAND
Well, hello to you, too!

She sighs, frowns at him.

REBECCA
Well, I'm sitting here wondering what I'm doing on a plane headed for San Francisco when we have perhaps the most significant discovery in human history waiting for us in *Chile!*

BRAND
(poker face)
I need you to open a, uh, Hot Cocoa exhibit. San Jose. Very important.

REBECCA
Yeah, so's the nude colony.

Brand raises a single brow.

BRAND
Is Bhodal with you?

REBECCA
He's asleep in the back. Jon, how and why did you pull me from Chile? I don't get it.

BRAND
Just meet in my office as soon as you get in. You're not mad at me, are you?

REBECCA
Well. Maybe.

They both smile at one another.

INT. CORPORATE JET - DAY

Rebecca talks to Brand on a like display.

BRAND

(V.O.)

We'll talk later. See ya, toots.

REBECCA

Toots?! Is it 1940?

Brand laughs, terminates the transmission. Rebecca sits, a bit peeved.

REBECCA (CONT'D)

I'm gonna kill him! No I'm not.

In the b.g. we see Bhodal, asleep and snoring.

EXT. BRAND HQ, SAN FRANCISCO - MORNING - EST.

In San Francisco's cityscape, a monolithic I.M. Pei-designed Brand professional complex. Three towers, one 140-stories and two 100 stories, in a smooth-skinned triangle. A sign here reads *BRAND ENTERPRISES WORLD HEADQUARTERS*.

EXT. BRAND HQ SECURITY GATE - DAY

Brett Gabriel pulls up in a vintage VW camper van, shows his ID, drives into the massive business park.

EXT. BRAND HQ VALET

Burdened with a briefcase and an overstuffed computer tote, Brett exits his VW, hops the curb, enters the main building.

INT. BRAND HQ

Brett crosses a fabulous foyer, enters an elevator.

INT. ELEVATOR - DAY

Brett and the ELEVATOR ATTENDANT press a key each into a lighted port. They turn simultaneously, the elevator moves. An indicator shows floors going down.

BRETT

Thanks, man.

INT. BRAND HQ CORRIDOR

Brett exits the elevator, waves to the attendant. He walks this completely featureless hall past the acknowledgement of several GUARDS.

INT. HALLWAY TERMINUS

Brett stops at a high-security terminal, does a retinal ID scan. A double-door opens, he continues down a corridor.

INT. BRETT'S BRAND HQ LAB

Gargantuan place with techs everywhere.

Computerized consoles Italian-designed, and cutting-edge equipment pack the room. The place resembles a 23rd century air-traffic control complex.

Through a large observation window sprawls a white-out chamber with a highly-modified "G-LAB" flight training/G-Force simulator. The contraption is huge, menacing.

Sitting at the window is a massive computer system. Brett makes with the AD LIBed "Hellos," takes his place at the center of the console.

Brett slides between lights, dials, gauges. Beside Brett is CHARLES, 28, a good-looking Jamaican man with short dreadlocks and a lab coat.

CHARLES
(Jamaican accent)
Where you been, mahn?

BRETT
On the moon, island brother.

A 10' wide paper-thin transparent OLED screen sits console center. Three-dimensional computer graphics coalesce. Brett types, the figures change.

To the left an industrial Saeco cappuccino rig chugs away.

A door opens, an attractive blonde girl, GALE, 24, British, steps through. Her hair looks sorta like The Go-Go's. She's clothed in electrodes and medical gownage. Two sterile-suited NEUROTECHS attend her.

GALE
(Northern)
Morning, gents.

Brett grabs a fresh cappuccino, offers it to Gale with the raise of a cup.

GALE (CONT'D)

Gladly!

She walks over, drinks while the neurotechs work.

BRETT

So Gale...you ready to fry your mind for science?

GALE

I'm here for credit hours only, smart guy!

TECH

Green light.

BRETT

(to Gale)

Well. You're up.

(to staff)

A'ight, we ain't gettin' paid by the hour!

CHARLES

Man, you stole that line from the ALIENS movie.

Brett grabs the remains of a hot dog, gobbles it down, gives Charles a wink, stands for a final check.

INT. POD CHAMBER

Gale is placed in the simulator pod. A mechanism clamps to the back of her skull, pod door closes. Brett hits a switch.

BRETT

Gimme some juice, Charles.

The simulator cranks to life, hums loud. It makes a revolution, gains speed.

BRETT (CONT'D)

And...genetic stage one.

Charles adjusts, the simulator spins faster. Motors throb.

BRETT (CONT'D)

Gale?

GALE
(V.O.)
Fine, luv.

BRETT
Alright, stage two.

Gale grimaces, her breath labored.

BRETT (CONT'D)
Charles?

From a corner of the chamber a thin blue laser flashes from an eyelike lens, lights a sensor atop Gale's pod. It tracks with precision.

BRETT (CONT'D)
Let's get a look.

Brett hits the return key, the monitor fills with garbage characters and text.

CHARLES
Filters.

Another laser, red, and another pod sensor is tracked. The OLED clears, organized code assemble. Brett is satisfied.

BRETT
Stage three...please.

Another laser, yellow. Brett and Charles watch the monitor: no change.

BRETT (CONT'D)
Damn. Reverse the lithium carriage
and hemoconducant, simultaneously.

Charles looks surprised off this, but complies.

Two more lasers, purple and green, flash from distant ceiling eyes, hit the pod sensors. The chamber is a barrage of twisting beams, the speeding pod, sound. Like some kind of far out carnival ride.

BRETT (CONT'D)
Genetic stage four.

A klaxon sounds. Text on the screen suddenly reads: *SUBJECT APPROACHING UNCONSCIOUSNESS*. Sparks and smoke from a secondary panel.

CHARLES
Filter fail, row 22.

A TECH sprays a small fire extinguisher.

CHARLES (CONT'D)

Nope: filters gone in 22, mahn.

BRETT

Shut the damned thing down.

Charles complies. The scanner pod winds-down. Brett slumps, head in hands.

CHARLES

Standby, Gale.

(to Brett)

Sorry, mahn.

BRETT

Not your fault. Damn.

(beat)

Alright, one more try.

EXT. TWILIGHT HEAVENS - EVENING

An unmarked Global Express private jet makes way above a craggy coast.

INT. GLOBAL EXPRESS

Grähm enjoys part of a Berlioz symphony *Marche au Supplice*, watches the passing landscape. An intercom buzzes.

GRÄHM

Yes, Vincent.

VINCENT

(V.O.)

Our San Francisco operatives are on Emerald standby. And our fellow on the inside is firmly in place.

GRÄHM

Make sure his wife and children are kept comfortable. They're not to be harmed unless I myself say so.

Vincent cuts out. Grähm's eyes return to the window.

INT. BRETT'S LAB

The simulator pod whips around the chamber through a lattice of multicolored lasers. Gale winces.

BRETT

And...stage one, two, three.

Another laser flashes, tracks the pod.

BRETT (CONT'D)

Engage the new filter bank. Run the patch code...now.

From all directions in the chamber, white-hot lasers flash to the pod. Seven in all, they mix with the previous beams. The display is a kaleidoscope of motion, light, sound.

CHARLES

Rerouting data.

Brett watches with great anticipation. The OLED monitor clears in part, organized codes assemble.

CHARLES (CONT'D)

Okay, try it.

A klaxon sounds. Text on the screen: *SUBJECT BRAIN CHEMISTRY WEAKENING*. Brett jumps to another console.

BRETT

Cutting power thirty percent.

The klaxon sounds again. Brett struggles with controls as more text hits the screen: *SUBJECT BRAIN CHEMISTRY FAILING*.

Brett turns to another panel, makes a last-ditch adjustment.

CHARLES

Look!

Brett looks at the screen: *SUBJECT CHEMISTRY STABLE. PROCEED*. Below this is a familiar "C:/" prompt.

CHARLES (CONT'D)

We in, mahn!

BRETT

Gale?

Charles scans a scope.

CHARLES

Fine.

Brett pecks on the keyboard. He types in DIR and hits return. The display clears.

BRETT
Mm. Well, we got farther somehow,
but we still didn't get—

On the monitor comes a message with a progress bar beneath.
It fills:

BUILDING USER INTERFACE, ENGLISH LANGUAGE VERSION.

BRETT (CONT'D)
No way.

The progress bar jumps on the screen, fills. Once complete, a
prompt says: *PRESS <RETURN> FOR ACCESS.*

CHARLES
The human brain, mahn. Now live, in
gorgeous color!

Cheers and hugs all around. Brett stares at the keyboard, and
then looks to the monitor, silently.

BRETT
English language? Really? Hm.
Anyway, let's do it. Genetic
secrets, comin' up.

EXT. RUNWAY - SF INTERNATIONAL - MAGIC HOUR

Brand's Mozart Boom private jet screams to a landing.

EXT. BRAND HQ - EVENING

A Brand Enterprises Mercedes/Pullman armored S550-54 moves to
the main gate. Back passenger window hisses down, we see
Brand inside who waves to the GUARDS. The limo rolls through.

INT. BRETT'S LAB

The genetic experiment still in progress, Charles and Brett
get ready for the real thing.

BRETT
(to everybody)
Lookin' good, but ain't time for
champagne yet, people. Maybe soon.
(to Charles)
You ready for this?

Charles hesitates, nods. Brett hits return, types. A couple
beats later, menus on the screen:

LEVEL 1: VERBAL LIBRARY

LEVEL 2: ALL ANATOMICAL FILES

LEVEL 3: MINOR CHEMICAL/GENETIC MANIPULATION

...levels four thru six read the same, *CLASSIFIED (NO ACCESS)*

...and then, *LEVEL 7: MASTER SECURITY STRING.*

BRETT (CONT'D)

Master looks tasty.

Brett types. The selection *LEVEL 7: MASTER SECURITY STRING* flashes, a complex diagram zooms out, fills the screen.

We immediately recognize the diagram as the heptagonal shape of the map Brand found on the Roman boat. A skeletal, schematic view, six distinct "nodes" lead to grid center and on to the 7th spot, which would be the multicolored jewel on Brand's physical map. English text sits above each node.

BRETT (CONT'D)

Some kinda file tree, or somethin'.

There's a pause. The center symbol zooms out, fills the screen. The image is gone, several words show:

NO ACCESS. SEE LEVEL 1 THRU 6.

Brett clicks, the menu selections reappear. He chooses *LEVEL 1: VERBAL LIBRARY*. The screen clears. The full seven-node map comes again, the first node lights, we zoom to...

ACCESS GRANTED.

A graphic fades-up, enlarges. Its a spectacular, wire-frame rendering of the human body. As the image rotates, the skull lights and the brain is visible. The graphic slides monitor-left. Texts speed and blur.

BRETT (CONT'D)

Break it.

Charles hits another key. The words break, stop. Distinct block letters in the upper-left corner read *LEVEL ONE: VERBAL LIBRARY*. In the lower-left corner, *PASS CODE 1: MG-26438.*

BRETT (CONT'D)

(clunky)

"Stop-it, Bobby...mom, tell-him-to stop-hitting-me." The hell?

(Charles shrugs)

Put me up front.

Charles punches some buttons. The text header scrolls downward. Brett leans toward the display.

BRETT (CONT'D)

"Ma, ma, ma, moo, do"...? Bullshit.
Show me the end, please.

(Charles does)

"Well, Brett's kind of cute, but
he's a bit of a geek, you think?"
Quit screwin' around, man!

CHARLES

C'mon, bobo, look at that. It's a
recording, mahn. Every word she
ever said. Every one!

BRETT

(checking)

Daym. Daym! Okay, uh, let's go back
to the layout.

CHARLES

Wait, mahn: Pass Code.

BRETT

Yep. And I bet we're gonna need
those for later. Check on Gale.

Charles checks a scope.

CHARLES

Cool.

Brett nods, hits some keys. The main menu/map with its seven
nodes comes up. He selects *LEVEL 2: ALL ANATOMICAL FILES*.

BRETT

Word library is rad, for sure. But
let's get some anatomics.

The screen blanks, the full seven-node map arrives. This time
the second node lights, but also the first.

A line draws itself from the first node to the second,
connects. We zoom to the second. The screen clears, then
shows the human brain. Five words flash *LEVEL 2: ALL
ANATOMICAL FILES*.

A wondrous representation of the entire human body unfolds,
all organs and body systems visible and labeled. Two more
words, *FILES READY*, then...

WHAT IS THE QUESTION?

A cursor flashes, waiting.

BRETT (CONT'D)
Heavy duty. So what's the question?

A small circuit burns out. Brett leaps, checks a panel.

CHARLES
Smoked that one.

An alarm klaxon, the chamber is bathed in blue light.

BRETT
Get Gale outta there!

Charles moves quick, his eyes widen.

CHARLES
Can't stop it! Bumbo!

BRETT
Emergency shutdown, now!

The power dies. Darkness. Backups kick in, lights return.

BRETT (CONT'D)
Gale!

Brett runs out.

INT. CHAMBER

A team of Neurotechs converge on the G-LAB pod. Gale is half-conscious with a nosebleed; frothed saliva trails from her mouth to her neck. Brett runs up.

NEUROTECH
She'll be alright. One too many
G's, that's all.

Gale is lifted to a wheelchair, eyes rolling. They rush Gale off. Brett grabs Gale's headset.

BRETT
Get this place picked up. Get some
new breakers. I want a color
printout of that last schematic.
Also, track the log and find out
what command got us in.

CHARLES

(V.O.)

Mr. Brand called. He want you in
his office, bobo.

BRETT

Now?!

CHARLES

He say be there or he come get you.

BRETT

I'm gonna check on Gale first. You
got the helm, Rasta.

Brett rushes off, in the direction of Gale's exit.

INT. BRAND'S OFFICE - NEAR SUNSET

Voluminous and empty, save for a peppering of contemporary
furnishings among curious and colorful sculptures. Room
center is a modern desk. Sunset cascades from a panoramic
135th floor picture window. The San Francisco Bay sparkles.

Also here is a display case of ancient weapons, among them a
set of Liberty Revolvers from the Old West. In perfect
condition, they sit in a nice array, with three quickload
cartridges each.

A bright, attractive ASSISTANT, Clara, 24, places a file on
the desk. A door opens in the b.g. It's Brand, all smiles in
a blue Bergdorf Goodman suit. He approaches.

CLARA

Welcome back, Mr. Brand.

BRAND

Hi, Clara. Is it here yet?

CLARA

In your gallery. Oh, and Rebecca
sent an old fashioned fax.
(she hands it to him)

BRAND

(chuckles)
A fax, huh?

Brand hits a button. A small wet bar pops up. He puts the fax
slightly aside.

BRAND (CONT'D)

So what's on the big menu?

CLARA

You have about sixty messages waiting. And the Friday dinner with Senator Kamiński...?

BRAND

Business has to hold a few days, Clara. Keep 'em at bay?

CLARA

Absolutely.
(beat)
And sir? I'm really sorry about your father.

BRAND

Thanks, Clara. Thanks.
(beat)
Oh, could you directly send Rebecca when she arrives?

CLARA

Yessir. And Brett's on his way up.

BRAND

(smiles wide)
He better be.

Brand prepares a Jura Scotch, neat. Clara exits, the door closes behind her. Brand hits another button, a wall across the room hisses back revealing light within. Brand grabs Rebecca's fax, enters.

INT. BRAND'S SANCTUM

A stunning collection of lore. Books, urns, tablets, weapons, furniture; all wondrous, unique, ancient.

He scans: Murals of human struggle, tapestries, a pair of sculptures by Braslow (spectral figures without faces).

Room center is a high-tech aluminum crate, jet black with various LEDs glowing. Beside is a tray of LED flashlights.

Brand approaches, punches a digital keypad with combination. A small rush of air, the crate lid pops open. He stares down at the bizarre triangular case from the Roman warship, touches it. He drinks, ponders, reads the fax from Rebecca.

BRAND

(pronouncing to himself)
"Cassapal"...

Brett steps out of nowhere, surprises him.

BRETT
Hell is this? The batcave?

BRAND
(flustered)
Get outta here!

BRETT
Whoa! What's up?

Brand has the face of a man caught red-handed. He grabs Brett's arm, escorts him out.

INT. BRAND'S OFFICE - EVENING

Brand and Brett exit the sanctum, Brand shuts the door.

BRETT
Hey, shoppe's safe with me, man.

BRAND
I may have something else.

BRETT
Do tell.

BRAND
(smiles)
I'll do better than that. Later.

Silence. Brett clears his throat.

BRETT
Listen. About your dad, I—

BRAND
I'm okay. Really.
(beat)
How much money did you waste today?

REBECCA
(O.S.)
Plenty, I'm sure.

Rebecca enters, walks to Brand.

REBECCA (CONT'D)
Jon, I just heard. I'm really sorry
about Benjamin. You okay?

BRAND
I'm fine. Thanks.

There's a flash of something here. A deeper emotional connection, something in the eyes between them. Brand turns from the moment, walks away.

BRAND (CONT'D)
Got your fax. I'd like to discuss it after I show you both—

BRETT
Whoa, there, big guy! Didn't anybody tell you? We did it!

Brand stops, stunned.

BRETT (CONT'D)
We did it, Jon. We got the brain genetics responding to line commands! You should see it! Classified files, organ diagrams...

BRAND
You sonofabitch! You wait to tell me *now*?

BRETT
Hey, you were all batcave.

REBECCA
(warmly)
Congratulations, Brett. Really.
(checks watch)
Um, hate to be pushy, but Dr. Bhodal is waiting.

BRAND
Yes, yes. Damn. Bring him in.

Rebecca walks back to the office entrance.

BRETT
Hey, hey, hold up, here, time out!

BRAND
Relax. You'll see.

Rebecca and Bhodal enter in the b.g.

BRAND (CONT'D)
Joseph!

His arms catch Brand in a hug, one heartily returned.

JOSEPH

The last I saw you, you were but a boy. And now...a new hope.

BRAND

Wouldn't go *that* far.

JOSEPH

I want to express my condolences, regarding your father. He was a brave man. And greatly technical.

BRAND

Thank you. I appreciate that.

(beat)

Um, please excuse me.

Brand leaves them, moves toward his secret door.

JOSEPH

And Doctor Gabriel, once more!

Bhodal and Brett shake hands.

BRETT

Just call me Brett, sir.

BRAND

(O.S.)

Okay, folks.

Brand emerges carrying the map case and the tray of flashlights. He lays the case on his desk.

REBECCA

Fancy.

BRAND

And very old.

Bhodal approaches the map case. He runs his hands over, gently feeling each relief.

REBECCA

I don't recognize the period.

JOSEPH

Indeed. The design is most unusual.

BRAND

You haven't seen the best part.

Brand opens the case. The others move up, peer inside. They see the ladder and the darkness.

Brand picks up the case, holds the lid open. He moves it around. The room with its ladder stays visible.

BRAND (CONT'D)
So much for the Laws of Physics.

They all look like they just swallowed an ocean liner.

BRAND (CONT'D)
Somebody wanna say something?

REBECCA
Where did this come from?

BRAND
From a temple. In South America.

REBECCA
Wait. *Chile*?

BRAND
Aboard a 150' Roman trireme war galley, shipwrecked two-thousand years ago. Of course, after it visited *Chile*.

REBECCA
The stolen centerpiece?

Brand nods. Rebecca grabs him.

REBECCA (CONT'D)
Jon!

Brand, surprised, raises a single brow. Rebecca realizes she's holding him, pushes away, embarrassed. Brett laughs.

REBECCA (CONT'D)
Great.

JOSEPH
Then...this is it.

BRETT
How the hell did two-thousand year old Romans even wind-up in South America? Or Antarctica?!

BRAND
With a map they stole when they invaded Egypt.

Smiles at Bhodal.

JOSEPH

Egypt? Then the map to South America was originally with the Cassapal Monolith, at Malta.

BRAND

Interesting circle of events.

(looks up)

Dad, you didn't die for nothin'.

BRETT

What *is* this thing?

BRAND

Let's have a look.

Brand picks up a widescreen flashlight, climbs inside the map case. He motions for the others to do so, and one by one they grab flashlights and file down.

INT. MAP ROOM

The group assembles. They puzzle over the huge heptagonal map on its easel, with the mysterious grids and symbols.

Flashlights wind across the plate's surface, detailing the majesty of the relic. Rebecca is entranced, Joseph gravitates to the mathematic equations.

REBECCA

Platinum.

BRAND

That's right. The center seems to be seven individually colored diamonds, somehow fused together.

Brett can't believe what he's seeing.

BRAND (CONT'D)

Brett, you with us?

BRETT

Guys, this is the brain schematic!

REBECCA

The who?

BRETT

This is the interface we got from the brain with the genetic drill we ran today!

He walks to the map.

BRAND
Just similar?

BRETT
Ain't no way. This is a copy, man.
This is it! Heptagonal, seven-side.

Joseph and Brett study the many platinum channels and mysterious runes with a quiet intensity. The symbology is heavily mathematic, perhaps chemical.

Something stirs Joseph. Brett looks at him.

BRETT (CONT'D)
You see it?

JOSEPH
I expected as much.

BRAND
What?

BRETT
Ultimate power, man. I mean the
kinda juice that would split the
planet wide open.

JOSEPH
This is true. These symbols around
the center stone— expressions of
power beyond that of every star in
the nighttime sky.

BRAND
What's the center symbol?

JOSEPH
Very old, unseen for many thousands
of years. Quite simply, it's the
one, or the ones, who would be
considered by many beliefs to be
the Creators. Of course, more
obvious to conclude that the owners
of these relics is a species who
added seeds of life to the earth.
And perhaps altered things,
millions of years ago.

BRAND
So, not a weapon at all.

BRETT

Jon, there's got to be a connection! You gotta see it!

REBECCA

What do you mean?

BRETT

Up here, in the brain. The same damn map! We navigated between the first two genetic nodes today.

BRAND

Okay. Time out. Let's get on track first thing tomorrow.

BRETT

As if we're gonna sleep.

JOSEPH

Will you excuse me? I must make use of the men's facilities.

BRAND

Sure. Out my office, to the left.

Bhodal departs, back up the ladder.

REBECCA

And if Grähm finds out?

BRAND

I'm gonna move this to the vault in a few minutes.

BRETT

That reminds me. How the hell does that Grähm cat know so damn much? Where's the leak?

BRAND

I don't know. He's very good, though. We've gotta keep a lid on this. Tight.

REBECCA

I'd like to stay here a while, Jon.

BRAND

Not too long, okay? Brett?

Brand and Brett scale up the ladder.

INT. BRAND'S OFFICE - NIGHT

They exit the map case. Brand moves to the wet bar, fixes another scotch. He motions to Brett, who declines. Brand finishes, walks to the picture window, absorbs the San Francisco Bay.

BRETT

You okay?

BRAND

Pandora's Box comes to mind.

BRETT

No way, Jon. We're makin' history!

Brand sips his Jura. No expression.

BRETT (CONT'D)

This is some pretty indisputable off-world-style evidence, man.

The phone rings. Brand moves to his desk, picks up.

BRAND

Yes. Hi, Clara. Grähm? Christ.
Okay, put him on.

BRETT

You gotta be kidding me.

Brand puts the call on a speaker.

CLARA

(V.O.)

Go ahead, please.

GRÄHM

(V.O.)

Already examining the map, are we?

BRAND

Say again?

GRÄHM

(V.O.)

Dear old dad was always one step ahead, rest his soul. I'm sure you didn't even have to bury him. Probably well pickled, in bourbon.

BRETT

Motherfff—!

Brand immediately waves hard at Brett to be silent.

GRÄHM

Ah, the little Black man, Brett Gabriel. What's up, "bro"?

BRAND

I don't wanna hear shit like that, *especially* from you. White boy.

GRÄHM

(V.O.)

Right. I'm keenly interested in taking the map off your hands. Immediately. I'm prepared to offer a handsome exchange.

BRAND

Didn't we do this already?

GRÄHM

(V.O.)

Ah, but this time it's better: Your life, or the map. You have thirty seconds to decide.

Brand walks to his console, fully alert.

BRAND

You're making threats you can't keep. From a telephone.

He presses a button. A table-top monitor shows a schematic:
BEGIN TELEPHONE TRACE? <YES>/<NO>

BRAND (CONT'D)

But, you'll understand if I don't take you seriously.

<YES>: The system whirls, calculates, calculates. Brett moves in, watches.

GRÄHM

(V.O.)

A pity.

The trace continues. A caption reads: USA, CALIFORNIA.

BRAND

Oh? How's that?

GRÄHM

(V.O.)

Because I will have the map. One way, or the other.

The trace continues: SAN FRANCISCO.

GRÄHM (CONT'D)

(V.O.)

I'm waiting for your answer.

BRAND

And I'm waiting for yours.

GRÄHM

Oh, that. You should know in four seconds, I suspect.

The trace caption reads *BRAND ENTERPRISES WORLD HEADQUARTERS*.

A schematic of the BRAND HQ unfolds, a phone extension just outside Brand's office lights.

GRÄHM (CONT'D)

So what will it be?

Brand kills the call.

BRETT

That's just down the hall.

BRAND

Rebecca!

INT. MAP ROOM

Rebecca continues her scan of the map's runes.

INT. BRAND'S OFFICE

BRAND

Get her, Brett!

Brett rushes toward the map case. Brand hits an intercom, and also hits a red button. The double entry doors bolt shut. A panel in the far wall slides away, reveals an elevator tube.

VOICE

(V.O.)

Flight deck.

BRAND
This is Jonathan Brand. Get my
chopper ready now, please.

The power dies. Darkness. Weak emergency lights kick-on
around the office. Brett is at the map case. He yells down.

BRETT
Becky! Get your ass up here, now!

INT. MAP ROOM

Rebecca sees and hears.

REBECCA
What now, genius? And stop calling
me *Becky*, alright?

INT. BRAND'S OFFICE

Brand turns, grabs a flashlight. He smashes one of the
weapons cases, grabs the two Liberty Revolvers.

He breaks one open, quickloads with a bullet clip, slides it
across the floor to Brett at the map case. It bumps his foot.
He looks, but doesn't pick it up.

BRETT
(into case)
Grähm's here! Let's go!

Footsteps come, outside the double-door. The exterior handles
jiggle. Brand breaks another Liberty open, quickloads,
pockets two additional loaders. He checks the pistol as...

The double-doors explode.

Five COMMANDOS emerge from smoke and fire, in standard
assault formation. They're clothed in black, faces masked,
eyes covered by night vision devices.

Each have Gryphon GAR15 machine rifles.

COMMANDO #1
(Scand accent)
Drop the pistol!

Brand drops his pistol. Brett gives a quick glance to the one
at his foot.

INT. MAP ROOM

Rebecca hears what's going on. She moves away from the relic, into the darkness of the endless room.

INT. BRAND'S OFFICE

Brett slowly closes the lid on the map case, moves back a step, hands raised.

Commando #1 see the situation is stabilized, yells a clearance in Icelandic.

A silhouette approaches, casually smoking a cigarette with trenchcoat gently flapping. He walks into the crossbeams of emergency lights. Grähm.

Brand looks nervously at the map case on the desk.

GRÄHM

Sorry about the fireworks, Jon.

Grähm raises a single brow as he sees the case.

GRÄHM (CONT'D)

Not interrupting, am I?

The power returns and fire alarms scream. The commandos are flash blinded by their night vision devices, now overloaded with light.

Brand uses the distraction to scoop his Liberty revolver, as does Brett. And the gunfight begins.

Brand and Brett have an excellent defensive position, and though their antique weapons seem almost comic, they carry a very powerful punch. Grähm loses a man, Brett is grazed.

The commandos shrink from the doorway. Grähm dashes out of harm's way. Near the office door Grähm pulls a pistol of his own. Brand and Brett reload.

BRAND

Make a run for the elevator. Then
cover me!

Brett does so. Brand leaps, popping bullets from his Liberty. He finds an opening, gets Grähm clean in his sight, but...

Brand's out of ammo! Brand makes his dash, Brett covers with fire. The commandos pour it on.

Brand is hit, grazed on the forearm and shoulder. The elevator doors ache closed, Brand squeaks through.

Bullets pepper the metal but do not penetrate. They leave a deadly trail of dents as the elevator rises.

BRETT
(sees blood)
Jon!

BRAND
Just a graze. A couple, anyway. You
okay?

He nods, the doors open, to...

EXT. BRAND HQ ROOF/HELIPAD - NIGHT

A McDonnell Douglas MD-900 NOTAR (no tail rotor) helicopter waits, black and blue with small Brand logos.

A couple MAINTENANCE GUYS are nearby. They see Brand and Brett's wounds, rush to them. Brand quick-loads his revolver.

BRAND
Call the cops, tell 'em we got hit
by some kind of terrorist group.
And lock yourselves up!

Brand jumps into the NOTAR, Brett beside. They belt up, prep, then Brand takes the craft to the San Francisco sky.

INT. NOTAR - NIGHT

Brand adjusts his headset while Brett powers the radio.

BRETT
To anyone monitoring this channel,
emergency, Brand Enterprises World
Headquarters, terrorist attack,
repeat...terrorist attack. Pretty
sure they're from outta town.

EXT. CITYSCAPE - NIGHT

Brand's NOTAR makes passage. A white Bell 230 chopper moves in behind, a gatling mini-gun swings into position. Bullets with yellow tracers fire. A miss.

INT. BRAND'S NOTAR

Yellow tracers flash past the NOTAR windshield.

BRETT
Aw, shit, man!

BRAND
Hold on.

Brand dives skillfully, and the aerial chase ignites.

EXT. HARRISON ST. - NIGHT

All's quiet. A couple walk arm in arm to their car.

From around a corner comes Brand's chopper, dangerously low between buildings. Following is the 230, its cannon tracks the NOTAR.

The couple runs for cover behind a parked and empty Amazon delivery truck. The 230 fires, shreds the vehicle. The couple is unharmed, but shocked.

Brand speeds wildly down Harrison, Grähm's men behind.

EXT. 2ND & BRYANT - NIGHT

A police cruiser stops at a North-South traffic light, two cops inside. One drinks a coffee.

In the east-west lane Brand's MD-900 streaks through the intersection, four feet from the ground. It screams beneath the Bay Bridge underpass, Grähm's guys quickly follow with cannons blaring.

The cops exchange stares, the driver hits the cherries.

EXT. MARKET ST. - NIGHT

The aerial chase enters the financial district. The copters rocket over surface roads, police cruisers close behind.

INT. BRAND'S NOTAR

Brand is intense as he screams past the Transamerica building. The pursuit copter fires, sparks shower.

BRAND
Fuel line! We're goin' down!

Brand sights an unfinished skyscraper, acetylene work lights dot each level.

BRAND (CONT'D)
Or up. Hold on!

Brand wrenches the controls, the NOTAR zips straight up, Grähm's guys follow.

EXT. UNFINISHED SKYSCRAPER

Brand's copter arcs over the structure. The engine chugs twice, stalls.

BRAND
That's it!

INT./EXT. CHOPPER/SKYSCRAPER

Brand's NOTAR spiral lands/crashes on the unfinished roof. The engine dies, the main rotor tilts, shears to splinters.

Brand and Brett leap from the chopper. The MD-900 settles, crushes through the top two floors and they narrowly escape going with it. They lean against a girder, panting hard.

BRAND
You okay?

The Bell 230 creeps over the roof behind them. A sniper locks-on. Brand swivels, sees the threat. He pulls the Liberty...

Brand unloads four shots, eliminating the shooter and shearing a 230 hydraulic line. The Bell tumbles from view.

EXT. SIDE OF SKYSCRAPER

The Bell 230 bobs furiously, looms near a massive construction crane. Its rotor contacts the crane's extended line and the momentum wraps the chopper like a fly in a web.

Unbalanced, the crane leans and crashes 18 floors to the street below, the snared 230 whips along behind it like a tail on a kite.

EXT. UNFINISHED SKYSCRAPER

Brand and Brett look at each other.

BRAND
Hell of a night.

BRETT
What're we gonna do about Rebecca?

Brand gives him a look, deeply disturbed. From the distance comes sirens.

BRAND
I'm workin' on it.

INT. MAP ROOM

Rebecca comes out of the dark, looks around cautiously. She approaches the ladder, climbs up, listens. Unsatisfied, she pushes lightly on the lid, cracks it. She peeks through to...

INT. WAREHOUSE

The map case hangs in the center of a barren warehouse, from a chain bolted to the roof. It hovers inches from the ground. In this orientation, Rebecca emerges *vertically*.

A warehouse door opens, we see two guards allowing Grähm, VINCENT, an assistant...and Bhodal to enter.

GRÄHM
How long before the map is decoded
and usable?

JOSEPH
Difficult to say. Weeks? Months?

They approach, Rebecca slips back into the map case. Grähm arrives at the case first. He checks it over, rubbing his chin. He looks to the entrance, then to Vincent, quizzically.

VINCENT
Don't worry, sir. We've got roof
guards at every possible exit.

GRÄHM
Yes. Well, let's have a look.

Vincent steps forward with a key, unlocks the chain from the case's handle. He lays the case flat on the floor. Grähm opens the lid, peers within.

GRÄHM (CONT'D)
Amazing.

He climbs down the ladder, Bhodal behind.

INT. MAP ROOM

Grähm approaches the map. He studies carefully.

GRÄHM
Can you really make it work?

JOSEPH
(nervous)
In time, yes.

ANGLE OF: REBECCA'S EYES

...in the dark, trying hard to discern the two figures.

BACK TO SCENE:

Grähm gives a final check.

GRÄHM
I wonder. Very well, then.

He motions for Bhodal to ascend. They both do, closing the lid. Rebecca emerges from the dark, flicks her flashlight.

REBECCA
It's always *men* screwing things up.

She paces momentarily around the map.

REBECCA (CONT'D)
Okay, then.

She walk to the ladder, moves up the rungs. Cautiously she presses against the lid. It opens. She peers out through a small slit of light. No one's here. She opens the lid, assesses her location.

The warehouse is empty. Shadows of GUARDS, however, can be seen against first floor windows. She looks around, sees the chain above her. She thinks.

She climbs to the top rung of the ladder, standing up from the lid. She grabs the chain, locks her feet around the ladder's top rung. She pulls, the case lifts from the floor.

She closes her eyes takes a deep breath. She opens her eyes, grabs the chain, and climbs.

The map box is coming with her, and the chain is dropping into it. She climbs with her arms only, struggling. She's getting near a catwalk, sweating immensely.

It's an impossible sight, seeing the chain entering the lid, mid-air, and her body only half exposed.

She makes it. Barely. Like a person with hidden legs, she swings the lid to the catwalk and crawls out of the box. She immediately detaches the chain from its beam on the roof, tosses it into the map case.

She scans around, desperately checking for an exit. A door below opens. Vincent enters, carrying a key.

Rebecca crouches in the shadows of the catwalk, watching as Vincent approaches the floor below. He sees the map case gone, and the chain too.

He instinctively looks up. Rebecca slinks into the shadows, but he sees her.

VINCENT

Guards!

The door opens, three GUARDS come running. Vincent points upward. The guards open fire.

Rebecca crouches behind the map case. It makes a most effective barrier. Bullets simply bounce off.

Voices and yelling build below. She makes a run for it, holding the case like a shield.

But she has nowhere to go.

Bullets fly, hit the catwalk cable support. One side of the catwalk drops, Rebecca slides uncontrollably downward.

She's heading for a second floor window, and she can't stop herself. She puts the case in front of her, and...

EXT. WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

A train rumbles by an ancient crop of warehouse-style enclosures. The place is very dark.

Rebecca smashes through the second floor window, falling down, down...into a huge pile of sawdust, beside an industrial sander.

She collects herself, runs into the night. The train is a short distance away. With case by handle, she makes a dash.

Grähm's guards emerge. They see her sprinting, open fire. Multicolored tracer bullets light the evening.

Rebecca makes it to the train as it passes by. She jumps to the caboose, pulls herself up.

REAR CONDUCTOR
(O.S.)
Hey!

Rebecca turns. A fat REAR CONDUCTOR glares at her from the caboose's open window.

REBECCA
You have to help me!

REAR CONDUCTOR
Get the hell off'a here, lady! This
ain't no—

The caboose is riddled with bullets and tracers.

The conductor takes cover, Rebecca crouches behind her shield...as the train rounds a corner, taking them out of harm's way.

She relaxes. The conductor peeks out.

REAR CONDUCTOR (CONT'D)
Jeezus H. Christ!

REBECCA
Have a phone in there?

REAR CONDUCTOR
Sure do! C'mon!

There's a buzz in the air. One of Grähm's choppers cuts into view, heads for the caboose.

REBECCA
Uh oh.

We see a plume of smoke beneath the chopper as a wire-guided TOW missile makes flight toward the caboose. It snakes down the rail.

The Rear Conductor jumps, bounces down an embankment. As the rocket is about to impact, Rebecca rallies her courage and leaps. She's midair when the rocket lights-up the caboose. The rear cars of the train derail.

She hits hard, rolls, sliding into some mud. But she's okay...until the chopper lands and four commandos emerge.

She rolls over, crawls under a fence as they sight her and open fire.

She runs with the case, but she's in a dead-end storm drain, with only an eight-inch grate as an escape. She curses under her breath, thinks.

She climbs in the case, up to her waist. She grabs the storm grate, pulls herself and the case toward it. She goes down another rung, til only her arm is exposed. She pulls, the case fits under the grate...

...but not enough to drop into the drain!

Grähm's men approach, one of them runs to the case, tries to grab it.

But Rebecca is successful! She pulls the last inches with her hand, the case drops to a fetid, slow-moving drain system. The lid shuts, the case floats and bobs to the unknown.

EXT. BRAND'S MANSION - MORNING - ESTABLISHING

SUPER: BRAND ESTATE, SAUSALITO

Splendid Victorian architecture frames a well-tended yard, the San Francisco skyline visible in the distance.

INT. BRAND'S MANSION - MORNING

SUPER: DAY FIVE

Robed, Brand paces a balcony, sipping coffee. He talks on an iPhone, hair wild from restless sleep.

BRAND

Brett, I know. I went all over.
There's a couple hundred cops on
it. I'll be in before too long, so
just... Someone's beeping. Hold on.

Brand takes the other line.

BRAND (CONT'D)

This is Jon. Okay, just a second.

(switches phone)

Brett? Gotta go. Alright.

(switches)

Jon, here. I spoke with the FBI
last night, Clara. Alright,
alright. Um, hold on.

(MORE)

BRAND (CONT'D)
(switches)
This is Jon. Who? Be right down.

INT. BRAND ENTRANCEWAY - MORNING

Brand, in baseball cap and jeans, opens a huge double-door, reveals a dirty and battered Rebecca, map case in hand.

REBECCA
Your paper, sir?

Brand grabs her in a hug.

BRAND
You okay?!

REBECCA
Nothing a Chopin martini won't fix.

INT. FABULOUS KITCHEN - MORNING

Brand and Rebecca have espresso. There's an empty martini glass beside Rebecca.

REBECCA
He was maybe twenty feet away. Had someone else with him.

BRAND
Who?

REBECCA
Hard to see or hear in there.
(beat)
Are Brett and Dr. Bhodal okay?

BRAND
Yeah. Brett was with me. Turns out the good doctor was hiding in the men's room through it all.

REBECCA
Must have been terrifying for him.

BRAND
Yeah, well, thankfully you're okay. And, we got the map back. This time I'm locking it up for good.

REBECCA
Yeah, but...?

BRAND

But what?

REBECCA

Maybe the physical map and the technology Brett created are supposed to work together.

Brand reluctantly ponders this. One of the house staff, a BUTLER, approaches.

BUTLER

Mr. Brand? The gentlemen from the FBI have arrived.

BRAND

Thank you, Perry.

(to Rebecca)

Let me finish up here. Then we'll head into town and see Brett, get a look at this other map schematic he's ranting about. Deal?

Rebecca nods as Brand walks off. He gives her a hug before.

EXT. BRAND HQ - MID-MORNING

Brand's armored Mercedes S550 limo pulls through the gate with several police motorcycle escorts. The limo turns, passes a thick crop of armed SECURITY PERSONNEL.

The S550 pulls to a rear shipping area, stops. Brand and Rebecca emerge with the map case. They meet Brett and quickly move to the HQ.

INT. WELL-LIT CORRIDOR

A door opens in the b.g., quasi-military guards allow Brand, Rebecca, and Brett through. Brand pats a guard's shoulder as they pass.

BRETT

Man, it would take a cruise missile to pry this place open.

BRAND

Maybe more.

They walk to another door, a security pad activates. A guard does a retinal scan simultaneously with Brand. The door opens, revealing...

INT. STAINLESS STEEL CHAMBER

This area is large, cylindrical. Two guards are placed around the chamber.

Brand gives a signal to an overhead observation booth. The floor rises in front of them. A distinct vault-like room emerges, with an open doorway.

REBECCA

Fancy.

Brand hands-off the case to a waiting guard. They exit.

BRAND

And that's that. For now. You ready to show me the brain?

BRETT

Um. Well—

BRAND

What's the problem?

BRETT

It's our scanner pod volunteer. She quit. I only just found out myself.

REBECCA

I'll do it.

They turn to her.

REBECCA (CONT'D)

How hard can it be?

BRETT

Well, uh, you'll have to report to the lab.

BRAND

No, no, no, I don't think—!

REBECCA

On my way.

Rebecca turns and walks off.

EXT. SAN FRANCISCO BAY - DAY - ESTABLISHING

The warehouse district. Modern, clean.

INT. IMMENSE WAREHOUSE

The place is empty. Sunlight intrudes with solid beams, and we see Grähm sitting on a crate, room center. He pulls a drag from his cigarette. Vincent approaches, uneasy.

VINCENT

Mr. Brand has tripled his security.
We won't be able to make a move,
and even if—

GRÄHM

You don't attain the kind of power
we're after without loss of life,
Vincent. Hopefully not ours, but if
that's the case, such are the
fortunes of war.

(he smiles)

Code Sapphire. Immediately.

VINCENT

Sir, we've avoided Sapphire since—

GRÄHM

Immediately.

Grähm calmly takes a cigg drag as Vincent walks away. Vincent stops, turns back.

VINCENT

Sir, if I may. It's just over a
quarter century since the 911 event
in the US.

GRÄHM

Yes, and...?

VINCENT

Is it wise to repeat—

GRÄHM

It's what we need to do. What *I*
need to do. Don't worry, chap.
There will be rich rewards for all.

VINCENT

But a passenger jet of this size—

GRÄHM

Enough! Can I trust you to get this
started, Vincent?

Vincent slowly nods, turns and exits.

INT. BRETT'S LAB - DAY

A state of readiness: techs mill about, Brett and Charles check monitors. Through the viewing window is Rebecca, strapped in the simulator pod.

Brand steps quietly from a rear door. Brett motions to a chair behind the main console, Brand takes it.

The experiment is ready to run.

BRETT
Security blackout.

Brett slides a switch.

BRETT (CONT'D)
Becky?

REBECCA
(V.O.)
Ready. And don't call me Becky!

The simulator cranks, gains speed.

BRETT
Step-phase one thru four.

The simulator spins faster, Brand leans forward.

CHARLES
Stage two.

A blue laser flashes and locks to Rebecca's pod.

CHARLES (CONT'D)
Three.

Another laser, yellow. It hits.

CHARLES (CONT'D)
Stage four.

Two more lasers, purple and green, flash from ceiling eyes and lock to the blur of the speeding pod.

CHARLES (CONT'D)
Stage five. Now.

BRETT
Holdin' up, man. Nice work.

On the OLED screen: C:/

CHARLES

We're there.

Brett types in DIR, hits return. The display clears. The message with the progress bar appears, fills. Text above reads *BUILDING USER INTERFACE, ENGLISH LANGUAGE VERSION*.

The progress bar gets to the end, hangs for a moment. Menus appear: *LEVEL 1: VERBAL LIBRARY; LEVEL 2: ALL ANATOMICAL FILES; LEVEL 3: MINOR CHEMICAL/GENETIC MANIPULATION*; the rest read *CLASSIFIED (NO ACCESS)*, except...

LEVEL 7: MASTER SECURITY PASS.

BRETT

Watch this and tell me.

Brett hits some keys, the main menu/map appears. The display freezes at the heptagonal map schematic, which fills the screen. Brand can't believe it.

BRAND

Cleaner version, but the same.

CHARLES

As what?

BRETT

As nothin'. We need to break codes on the lower levels.

The first node lights, and then the second. A line draws itself between them, connects.

The screen clears, the monitor shows the human head again, with the brain. *LEVEL 2: ALL ANATOMICAL FILES*. A wondrous representation of the human form appears, all organs and body systems visible, labeled.

FILES READY, then, WHAT IS THE QUESTION?

BRAND

Interesting. How about, "Why Are Blue Eyes Blue"...?

CHARLES

Pass Code.

He points to the words *PASS CODE 2: MG-20737*.

BRETT

Noted. Okay, here we go.

Brett types *WHY ARE BLUE EYES BLUE?*, hits return. A couple beats, the screen clears. A human eye builds itself: Lens, iris, optic nerve, etc. As each element forms, heavy labels come and go.

When constructed, the iris expands outward, equations come to life, calculate. English texts explain why blue eyes are indeed blue.

This has taken place in less than four seconds. And four words hover at screen bottom: *WHAT IS THE QUESTION?*

BRAND

Ask how to see in the dark.

Brett clears the screen, types in, *HOW CAN THE EYE BE MODIFIED FOR VISION IN DARKNESS?*

Seconds pass. On the screen, some texts and a fully built human eye. It disassembles to the lens and retinal disk. Pointers spear the lens: *SURGICAL CUTS HERE. FURTHER INFORMATION ON LEVEL SIX.*

BRETT

Lemme try something right quick.

He types in *SHOW METABOLIC TABLES*. The screen responds with a startling graph. Brett rubs his chin, types *STOP SUBJECT'S AGING PROCESS*. A new window shows Rebecca's EKG. Brand gives Brett a disapproving look.

BRETT (CONT'D)

Don't you wanna live forever?

Another progress bar fills and completes itself. The monitor shows bizarre and colorful three-dimensional equations. A double-helix forms and is replaced by another formula.

Genetic information streams through the monitor. Double-helix coalesce, chromosomes flash in unison.

Text reads *MINOR REPAIRS ONLY, CANNOT COMPLETE WITHOUT ROOT/BASE EQUATION FROM LEVEL 5. SEE LEVEL 3.*

Brett types, *EXPLAIN NATURE OF LEVEL 3 REPAIRS.*

Beat. *NO FURTHER INFORMATION. SEE LEVEL 3.*

BRETT (CONT'D)

Level Three, Rasta.

Charles hits a control, a purple laser springs from the wall, hits. Three words sit on the screen, in large-block English: *FURTHER ACCESS DENIED.*

BRETT (CONT'D)
 Minor security. Try that pass code.

Charles complies.

CHARLES
 Not working, mahn.

A green laser fires from the wall, hits another tile. The monitor empties then reads: *WARNING: NO FURTHER ACCESS.*

BRAND
 (worried)
 Come on, Brett.

BRETT
 Not a problem. Decompile, Charles.

A white laser fires a tile. The monitor beeps over and over with *WARNING*.

BRAND
 Shut it down!

On the monitor is the number 10. Then 9, 8...

BRETT
 Shit.

...5, 4...

BRAND
 Brett!

The monitor beeps loudly, *YOU HAVE BEEN WARNED.*

BRETT
 Emergency cut!

...2, 1...

The building quakes, sparks fly. The lights, lasers, pod, everything dies.

Darkness.

BRETT (CONT'D)
 Got-dammit!

BRAND
 Rebecca!

A generator kicks in. There's a dim glow, but no light in the chamber itself.

In the semi-dark, they all run through the chamber door to the pod. Brand's there first, throws open the pod canopy as lights return.

Brand sees the pod interior, steps back. Brett rushes up.

Rebecca is gone. Vanished. Her suit and all personal affects remain, but her body is gone.

CHARLES

Oh, mahn.

CUT TO:

INT. IMMENSE WAREHOUSE - DAY - MANY ANGLES

Grähm's black and grey militia tend a variety of weapon-rich vehicles. All sorts of transportation: delivery trucks, fire units, ambulance, busses. All have familiar commercial logos.

Grähm watches all from an overhead catwalk. He pulls a final drag from his cigarette, crushes the butt.

INT. WELL-LIT CORRIDOR

Two guards allow Bhodal into the Brand vault area. He carries a large briefcase and several fat, ancient books. He does another retinal scan.

INT. MAP ROOM

Bhodal moves down the ladder. Once down, he pulls a cellular from his briefcase, dials. There's a ring, then...

GRÄHM

(V.O.)

Yes, doctor.

JOSEPH

The map has been moved to a tremendously secure vault area. No chance of invasion. And I certainly can't haul it out.

GRÄHM

(V.O.)

An inconvenience. You sit tight, and I'll take care of everything.

JOSEPH

Please, I can't be of further use.
I've helped you this far.

GRÄHM

(V.O.)

I will fly you to Bombay to witness
the killing of your family. Clear
your head. Are we communicating?

INT. BRAND HQ PRIVATE KITCHEN

Brett sits at a table, head in hands. Coffee steams in the
b.g. Brand is also here.

BRAND

Any ideas?

BRETT

Don't know, man. Levels of the
brain are protected by encrypted
algorithms. Security locks.

BRAND

Meaning?

BRETT

Meaning the pass codes are for
something else. They definitely
hold the key for what we started to
begin with. But, they may also—

BRAND

They may *also* have some relation to
the artifact. Put us online within
two hours.

BRETT

Nobody's going on the pod after
what happened.

BRAND

That's right. 'Cause *I'm* going.

BRETT

You're serious?

BRAND

Ultimately, this whole thing is my
personal responsibility. So, yeah.

Brett hesitates, then clicks an intercom.

NEUROTECH

(V.O.)

Lab.

BRETT

Shawn, I need you to get our next
subject ready to ride. Be nice.
It's Mr. Brand.

EXT. SAN FRANCISCO INT'L AIRPORT - DAY

Three MECHANICS walk beneath a gargantuan Boeing 777. They AD
LIB together.

INT. MECHANIC'S ALCOVE

The three mechanics AD LIB further until they're startled by
three of Grähm's heavies.

They're instantly surrounded.

EXT. NEAR 777 - DAY

In the mechanic's clothes, the trio of Grähm's heavies stroll
beneath the 777, toolboxes in hand. They round the side,
climb a small ladder to an aviation hatch section.

They remove a panel, probe with various tools. The largest
man, a RUGGED BALD GUY, takes charge.

ANGLE OF: ELECTRONIC DEVICE— alien to the airplane
circuitry. There's an amber light on top, now dark.

BACK TO SCENE:

The Bald Guy produces a small black remote from his case. He
presses, the amber light on the device glows. He presses
again, the light fades.

EXT. BRAND HQ - EVENING - EST.

INT. MAP ROOM

Joseph peruses the unknown map amidst old parchments and
charts of every sort. Next to him is an active laptop and
tray of half-eaten food with condiments.

Joseph runs his hands over the map, obviously checking for some sort of seam. He searches, reaching to the map's underbelly. He feels something. He kneels.

ANGLE OF: MAP'S BOTTOM

Revealing an obviously technological female-gendered plug, perhaps for a computer.

BACK TO SCENE:

Joseph, perplexed.

INT. BRETT'S LAB - EVENING

The lab is abuzz. Charles makes last minute adjustments. Joseph argues with Brett from a viewscreen.

JOSEPH
I tell you, it's some kind of
computer linking device.

BRETT
C'mon, Joseph!

JOSEPH
Please, will you just come down and
have a look? And where's Rebecca?
She was supposed to assist!

BRETT
(to Charles)
We got time?
(Charles nods)
Alright, Doc, I'm on the way. Oh,
Rebecca's... Delayed.

INT. MAP ROOM

JOSEPH
Very well.

Joseph cuts the transmission to Brett. His cellular rings.

JOSEPH (CONT'D)
This is Bhodal.

GRÄHM
(V.O.)
At 8:15 PM I will arrive at your
location.
(MORE)

GRÄHM (CONT'D)

I want you to eliminate everyone
inside the map case. Except for
Jonathan.

Grähm hangs up. Bhodal slams the phone to his briefcase in
rage. He composes, rummages the briefcase, pulls a polished
9mm pistol. He stashes it in his suit.

INT. MAP ROOM - EVENING

Brett is on his back, investigating the bottom of the map
with a flashlight. He checks further, stops, lays back.

JOSEPH

What is it?

BRETT

I swear this some kinda fibre optic
hook-up. Totally non-standard.
Maybe some off-world version of
stuff we used in the 90s.

Brett gets up, brushes off.

JOSEPH

You really think it's that?

BRETT

Be right back.

INT. SURGICAL ROOM

A cleanroom of white-hot lights and minimal surface detail.

Brand is here, undergoing prep for his run. Three NEUROTECHS
assist. Electrode gownage is applied, headgear attached. A
tiny blob of conductant is rubbed on his temples.

BRAND

Little daub'll do ya.

INT. MAP ROOM

Brett works under the map amidst an array of equipment,
monitors, gauges, and gear he's brought down. He uses a small
solder gun at the map's port.

Sparks pop. The port now looks very built-up, with all kinds
of rigged attachments.

Brett relaxes, finished. He gets up, walks to Bhodal's laptop. He sees the tray of food, now eaten except for a lone French fry...which he grabs, dips into the top of an open ketchup bottle, eats. He points to the laptop.

BRETT
Can I borrow that?

JOSEPH
Certainly.

Brett gathers the device, still powered-up. He picks a cable from the gear he gathered, checks it, moves behind the map. Brett plugs the cable into the map's rigged port and attaches the line to the laptop's USB4 connector.

BRETT
Okay.

He clicks away on the keyboard. a Unix-style programming shell appears. A prompt flashes *CONNECTION ESTABLISHED*.

BRETT (CONT'D)
Circuit's good!

He types further. There's a pause and a prompt:

ENTER PASS CODE 1.

Brett's eyes widen. He smiles.

BRETT (CONT'D)
Code 1. If I remember right, that
was M, G, 2, 6, 5, 3, 8.

Nothing happens.

BRETT (CONT'D)
Maybe it was...

Brett types M, G, 2, 6, 4, 3, 8, hits return. Nothing. But then the first jewel node on the easel map lights with brilliant color and a low-hum sound.

The sound dies, but the node stays lit. The jewel's gold ring turns clockwise 90°, clicks hard into place.

BRETT (CONT'D)
Yeah, baby!

INT. SURGICAL ROOM

Brand is nearly ready for his run. Brett walks in, stands by.

BRETT
Ready to make history?

BRAND
Didn't you just say that? So these
codes *physically* unlock the map?

BRETT
Yep. The first "jewel" thing on the
surface spun all the way around,
and then did a lock of some kind.

Brand ponders.

BRAND
We'll go farther, right?

BRETT
No doubt. Question is, how far?

BRAND
Interesting.

EXT./INT. SAN FRANCISCO AIRPORT - NIGHT

The Boeing 777 is now boarding. Personnel dart below the
giant jet, a few hundred passengers file through the gangway
and onto the plane.

EXT. BRAND HQ - NIGHT

Grähm's fake commercial vehicles prowl traffic. Several stop
a safe distance from the HQ, parking with lights out.

INT. ABANDONED OFFICE BUILDING - NIGHT

GRÄHM COMMANDO #2 peers through binoculars, watches the
vehicles. In the empty office space behind him lurk at least
ten other Grähm commandos, poised and quiet.

Commando #2 scans the HQ, sees a massive security force. He
taps his ear.

COMMANDO #2
Outpost Four: In place and waiting
for diversion.

He continues his scan.

INT. BRETT'S LAB

Brand in the pod, secured. Brett and Charles tend the console, prepped for the run.

CHARLES
Looks good.

BRETT
Jon? You comfy?

BRAND
(V.O.)
Lovely.

BRETT
Okay, man, we're gonna hit each level, get the codes, and split.

Charles does his number on the console. The pod stirs.

BRETT (CONT'D)
Stages One thru Five, please. Jon?

BRAND
I'm here.

A blue laser flashes, locks to the pod. A yellow one follows, then purple, and finally green.

CHARLES
Stage Five. We're there.

A flashing cursor with C:/ on the central monitor. Brett works fast. A progress bar blips momentarily and then the Levels menu.

Brett hits keys, the main menu/map appears. The second node lights, a line draws from the first node to the second.

WHAT IS THE QUESTION? PASS CODE 2: MG-20737

BRETT
Charles, decoder on my mark.

Charles holds a USB4 stick ready. Brett types quickly, gets—
FURTHER ACCESS DENIED.

Charles makes some keystrokes, gets YOU HAVE BEEN WARNED.

BRETT (CONT'D)
Yeah, right.

On the monitor the countdown begins: 10, 9, 8...

BRETT (CONT'D)
Charles, now!

...5, 4...

The monitor beeps loud: YOU HAVE BEEN WARNED.

BRETT (CONT'D)
(to himself)
Need more time.

...2, 1...

...0.

Silence.

On the screen is the main menu/map with its seven nodes. The third lights, as does the first and second. A line draws itself, then:

LEVEL 3: MINOR CHEMICAL/GENETIC MANIPULATION.

The monitor is a kaleidoscope of pyramidal charts and multicolored equations, all of which surround a complex diagram of the human nervous system.

WHAT IS THE QUESTION? PASS CODE #3: DW-92010. Brett and Charles exhale, relieved.

BRETT (CONT'D)
Movin' to Level Four. Charles?

After some furious typing the monitor reads:

ACCESS DENIED. YOU HAVE BEEN WARNED.

BRETT (CONT'D)
Expected that. USB 12, my man.

Charles inserts the USB, Brett hits the return key. The monitor goes blank. A beat and then YOU HAVE BEEN WARNED, over and over.

BRETT (CONT'D)
Dammit. Again, but stabilize.

A tremor hits the building, they're frozen. The monitor blanks, all lights but the console extinguish. A beat, everything restores.

LEVEL 4: BRAIN/NERVOUS SYSTEM. WHAT IS THE QUESTION? PASS
CODE 4: JO-51660

BRETT (CONT'D)
Level 5 Charles, and keep those
codes a-comin'.

Another laser to Brand's pod. Brett and Charles work the
console. The ACCESS DENIED—YOU HAVE BEEN WARNED flashes.
They hack further.

BRETT (CONT'D)
Tryin'.

On the monitor, the number 10. Then 9, 8...

BRETT (CONT'D)
Oh, hell.

...5, 4...

CHARLES
We're in.

On the display is LEVEL 5: ROOT/BASE EQUATIONS. Brett leans
closer to the screen, sees grids, symbols, and further
equations. He nods.

BRETT
Yep. Mathematic and chemical codes
for making changes to the body. The
master keys. Y'hear that, Jon?

WHAT IS THE QUESTION? PASS CODE 5: GD-36053.

BRETT (CONT'D)
Level six, please.

Charles sends another laser to Brand's pod.

BRAND
(strained)
Guys, could we hurry?

BRETT
Charles?

They hack within seconds. On the display:

LEVEL 6: LIBRARY OF SPECIES ORIGIN AND DETAIL OF SPECIES
CREATION. Brows raise. PASS CODE 6: GW-96220.

BRETT (CONT'D)
Wow. Just— Level Seven, please.

CHARLES
You really wanna pass this up?

BRETT
No. But later. Wow.

Charles clears the monitor with a keystroke. A white-hot laser flashes, strikes the pod. An alarm blares, text reads YOU HAVE BEEN WARNED.

There's an immediacy to this tone, a higher pitch. The message flashes over and over. Brett leaps to the console, maneuvers frantically.

BRETT (CONT'D)
It tricked us!

He pulls a USB stick, leaps to a terminal, pounds keys.

BRETT (CONT'D)
Bad string. Sonuva—!

On the secondary monitor, information scrolls by. Brett points, thinks, points, types. On the main screen, the countdown begins: 10, 9...

Brett leaps up.

...7, 6...

BRETT (CONT'D)
I got it!

...3, 2...

He slams in the USB...

...1...

Charles and Brett work the console at warp speed. The lights go out. Absolute darkness, absolute silence.

The lights come up. Brand's pod spins to a stop, his face visible within. On the display: PASS CODE 7: PW-85300. Brett leans back, relieved.

EXT. SAN FRANCISCO AIRPORT - NIGHT

The behemoth Boeing 777 taxis from the terminal.

INT. 777

Passengers ready for the ride.

INT. HEPTAGONAL MAP ROOM - NIGHT

Brand, Brett, and Joseph stand behind the map. Brett powers-up the connected laptop. The map's first node still radiates.

JOSEPH

And you have all of the codes?

BRAND

It would appear so.

Brett enters the third Pass Code, the third node sings with light and sound. Its gold ring spins, locks.

BRETT

Okay, here we go. Pass Code four,
five, and six. Stand back, people.

He enters the next three codes sequentially. Nodes four, five, and six stream with energy. Sound is louder than ever. Three loud sequential clicks, and the air itself vibrates. Random flashes of light all over.

BRETT (CONT'D)

Okay folks. Last code. If we stop,
we stop now.

BRAND

Do it.

Brett enters the last code. The center stone erupts with magnificent rays, like an ethereal searchlight. The map then goes dark.

BRETT

Got-damn!

BRAND

Now what?

BRETT

Don't know. Maybe it's—?

A peal of unearthly thunder scares the hell out of everyone. The place shudders. They bolt.

BRAND

Everybody out!

They move toward the ladder, the tremors cease.

BRAND (CONT'D)

Wait!

They watch as the map's entire center section slides upward, revealing a darkened space.

An icy wind blows a few dead leaves out from the space and into the room. All is quiet save for the scratch of leaves and the sound of distant, rushing water.

Brand walks to the map, looks inside. He leans in, sees the top of a shaft with a 12' drop to a tiled floor bathed in... Sunlight. The others gather around the entrance, steal peeks.

BRAND (CONT'D)

Well, somebody get a rope.

INT. 777 COCKPIT

CAPTAIN and CO-PILOTS AD LIB as the 777 heads for the runway. One of the pilots checks his watch.

ANGLE OF: PILOT'S WATCH

Two readouts, one military, one civilian: 20:00 hours and 08:00 PM.

EXT. RUNWAY - NIGHT

The 777 lifts to the night sky.

INT. ABANDONED OFFICE BUILDING - NIGHT

Commando #2 receives a transmission.

COMMANDO #2

Received. Out.

Commando #2 makes a motion with his arm, the company behind him files out, ready for action.

EXT. SAN FRAN STREETS - NIGHT

Grähm's quasi-military personnel empty from their vehicles, melt into the urban landscape.

INT. MAP ROOM - NIGHT

Brett returns with fluorescent green climbing rope.

BRAND

Any trouble and up I come.

Brett hands the coil of rope over to Brand who takes the end and tosses it down into the map.

Brand positions himself to rappel.

BRETT

Jon. Be careful.

Brand gives Brett a look, rappels into the map down to the tiled floor below.

INT. DEAD GARDEN CHAMBER - DAY

Brand lands on the floor, his hair tossed by cold wind. His breath frosts.

He's in the ground-level doorway of a chamber the size and basic shape of an indoor stadium. The walls and ceilings are of ancient, quarry-cut stone.

The chamber encloses a once magnificent garden, now but withered tall trees and bushes. Daylight is from an overhead skylight, cirrus clouds visible in blue depths beyond.

To Brand's left and right gush crystalline waterfalls.

Through the dead trees, perhaps 100 yards away, burn two green fires, their source hidden.

A path cuts that direction. Brand, astonished, moves forward cautiously. He takes the path, explores the dead foliage. At the end of the path he moves through a trellis to a beautifully marbled clearing.

INT. MAP ROOM

Brett peers into the map's shaft. Joseph Bhodal walks up behind him.

JOSEPH

Sir, please step back.

BRETT

I'm alright, doctor.

Brett turns to find Bhodal with 9mm drawn.

BRETT (CONT'D)
What the hell is that?

JOSEPH
I'm an expert marksman, Doctor
Gabriel. Please, no tricks.

BRETT
You're serious?

JOSEPH
Mr. Grähm expects to find you dead.

BRETT
You don't wanna do this. We can
stop Grähm. Together.

JOSEPH
Not possible.

BRETT
Listen to me. I'll tell you how.

Joseph just stares at Brett.

EXT./INT. 777 - NIGHT

The massive plane makes an arc over the San Francisco area.
The pilots tend their controls.

EXT. PALACE OF FINE ARTS - NIGHT

The bald Grähm mechanic sits near a pond. Next to him is a
small satellite dish and a connected keyboard/mini-monitor.
The 777 streaks through the b.g.

The mechanic hits a button.

INT. 777 COCKPIT - NIGHT

An explosion rocks the plane. It tilts wildly.

EXT. PALACE OF FINE ARTS - NIGHT

The bald mechanic works a keyboard. A navigational grid spins-
up. He types some coordinates.

INT. 777

The plane dives and turns. Passengers panic, the pilots struggle with controls.

EXT. PALACE OF FINE ARTS

The Grähm mechanic types more coordinates into his navigational tap, hits return.

EXT. 777

The plane banks tight, flips.

EXT. BRAND HQ - NIGHT

All's calm. The Grähm army waits for...

The scream of engines. A trickle, then a roar.

INT. 777 COCKPIT - NIGHT

The view spins, with one thing clear: the plane is about to nosedive into...

EXT. BRAND HQ - NIGHT

The Boeing 777 does a final graceful swing, slams Brand HQ with a titanic vaporized explosion.

INT. DEAD GARDEN - DAY

Brand enters the marbled clearing, which is surrounded by a larger garden. In the center is a raised white disk, something like an altar.

On either side are statues of great beauty and power. 14' tall ghostly, angelic, spectre-type figures without faces. Their eyes are vague sockets, with no mouths at all.

Their bodies have tapered wings, 12' in length. One statue is polished platinum, the other shiny gold. Both are draped in tattered robes.

They each carry a smokeless, fully flaming double-bladed 5' longsword of premium craftsmanship. Fire is luminous green.

Behind the spectres are two huge, purest white trees with jet black leaves. From the boughs hang succulent silver fruits.

Brand is speechless.

EXT./INT. DAMAGED BRAND HQ - NIGHT - MANY ANGLES

The 777 has doused the HQ with a jet fuel fire and destroyed much of the surrounding area.

Grähm's men converge on the chaos. They meet little resistance as they fight through fires, wreckage, and what security remains. They invade the building and move swiftly to the lower vaults, gliding unchallenged through the mayhem.

INT. MAP ROOM

Joseph stands with pistol ready. We hear Grähm's men above. Shadows appear at the ladder, and down come the first Grähm commandos, two of them, and then Grähm himself.

Now we see Brett, sprawled face down, a splatter of blood running from his head and across the floor beside his body.

JOSEPH

I've done as you asked. Please,
now. Release my family.

GRÄHM

Certainly, old man. And where would
you like the caskets delivered?

Joseph's face drains. He knows he's been betrayed. The commandos raise their weapons, but Bhodal is a lightning bolt: he kills both with a headshot apiece.

Brett suddenly springs up, a broken ketchup bottleneck in his hand—the same bottle he dipped the French fry earlier. Bhodal turns to Grähm.

JOSEPH

You wanted the power of heaven. Now
hell shall be yours.

GRÄHM

Doctor, I assure you, your family
is unharmed. I'm not a gargoye who
kills women and children.

Bhodal lifts the pistol to fire, and he's riddled with silenced bullets. He falls backward, quite dead. We see a commando and his rifle at the top of the ladder, peeking in.

GRÄHM (CONT'D)
(points at Brett)
Well, him, too.

Brett turns and runs. Bullets follow him into the dark.

Grähm motions the guards to pursue Brett. As the two commandos slide down the ladder, Grähm approaches the open map. He leans in, smiles wide.

INT. DEAD GARDEN - DAY

Brand enters the garden's center. Between the two trees sits a mausoleum. Its entrance holds an unknown starscape.

Brand is mystified. He steps up to the large altar-disk, sees a nude, silent feminine form in the center.

BRAND
Rebecca!

He rushes over, covers her with his jacket. She stirs. He tries to make her comfortable.

BRAND (CONT'D)
It's me. It's Jon.

REBECCA
What...where are we? Salt Lake?

BRAND
Um.

REBECCA
(dazed)
I had a dream. About us.

GRÄHM
(O.S.)
Do tell.

Brand turns, eyes wide.

BRAND
How the hell did you get here?!

Grähm has his 9mm held at waist level, trained loosely on Brand and Rebecca.

GRÄHM
Rebecca! A bit gratuitous, no?

Rebecca gets the creeps. Grähm surveys the grounds, enraptured. He breathes deeply.

GRÄHM (CONT'D)

Looks like an archetype Garden of Eden, I gather. Or simply, many such gardens from many cultures.

REBECCA

And guess who's the snake.

GRÄHM

At any rate, which of us will become heir to the powers of heaven? Or was all this stuff simply built to massage our universally primitive beliefs. Childish, no?

Grähm steps to the platinum spectre, tucks his 9mm into his pants. He leaps to the figure's arm, grabbing its deadly double sword.

Grähm pulls it easily, drops to the ground. The sword seems to weigh nothing. He marvels at the luminous green fire on the over-long 5' blades.

BRAND

Rebecca, get out of here.

GRÄHM

(moves forward)

Yes, go ahead. Can it matter now?

REBECCA

Not going, Jon.

BRAND

Don't argue, dammit! Lemme handle him. Please.

She stands reluctant, wrapped in Brand's jacket. She then moves toward the trellis at the head of the path.

Grähm approaches Brand, sword ready. He swings, the sword slices into the ground, leaving green fire and spark.

Grähm pulls the blade, swings again. Brand leaps on the arm of the golden spectre, yanks the other flaming sword, drops to the ground and blocks as Grähm swings again.

Brand stands and steadies his weapon, swings hard. The blades swoop past Grähm, hit the altar. Green sparks fly. Brand rebalances, Grähm jumps to position.

GRÄHM

I forgot your training. Excellent.

And the battle unwinds.

The duel is positively intense, complete with a round near the trees where a piece of silver fruit is cut, falls, and breaks on impact. Tiny faceted gems are released: diamond, ruby, emerald, sapphire, tanzanite, and so on.

Brand fights for life. Valiant as they come, and very excellent, but over time he can't match the skills of Grähm.

At one point they fight near the star-filled mausoleum. Brand is knocked to the entrance, struggling with his head and shoulders inside the entry.

He looks around him for a split second. A very strong wind is here, and many stars...

Battered and bloody, Brand turns and finally has his blades spirally snatched away. The weapon soars across the altar, lands in the dead shrubs, catches them afire.

Grähm moves in, the fire grows in the garden. Brand, gasping, drops to his knees. Grähm approaches. The fire behind him gets serious.

GRÄHM (CONT'D)

I loved you, I really did. So
gifted. Always helping the lesser
endowed. Creating good things.

Brand stares with hatred growing— when suddenly Rebecca walks behind Grähm and grabs the flaming sword that was knocked away from Brand.

Jonathan sees her, but keeps a poker face. However, Rebecca steps on a twig, and Grähm hears. He turns on one heel, but Rebecca makes an angry chop, hacking Grähm's left leg in two.

Grähm drops to a knee. In a moment his flesh burns from the inside-out, all with green fire.

Rebecca approaches, pierces Grähm through the chest. Grähm is clearly about to succumb. His flesh burns from the inside, he melts like a thermite drip.

Grähm is quite dead. Brand drops, spent.

Rebecca also drops, not happy about what she had to do...but also *happy* about it...?

Brand stands up, feels a little strange. He realizes he's getting a pull from the mausoleum entrance. And it becomes much more than a pull. More like gravitational grab.

REBECCA

Jon!

BRAND

Don't get near! Stay back!

Brand falls into mausoleum, and into the starscape.

He's gone.

REBECCA

Jon!

She runs to the entry, but feels the pull, falls and rolls aside. She cries.

EXT. WALL - NIGHT

Beneath a sky of unknown stars, Brand is sprawled nude atop a slender wall, a smooth, black, marble-like bulwark. 3' wide, it rises starkly three stories from the landscape beneath.

A gentle, ominous requiem pervades. Brand stirs.

He comes-to, sits up, sees a thin planetary ring running horizon to horizon above. Its delicate color glows constant.

Brand rises, startled and bewildered. He looks about and sees, by the light of three unevenly sized alien moons, courtyards stretching to nighted mountains.

Like samples from great castles, the yards flourish with fountains and paths.

Ahead Brand sees an enormous, domed structure. Reddish-chrome, it's slashed with two gigantic windows.

Brand walks slowly forward, toward the dome.

INT. SANCTUM - NIGHT

Brand finds a doorless entry. He moves inward, sees gargantuan vaulted ceilings, perhaps 12 stories high. Windows usher a legion of stars.

The ambient requiem is somewhat louder here.

An expanse of floor is at Brand's feet, covered from end to end with weathered, gold-laced vellum scrolls. Some burnt, others torn.

A black path cuts between. To his left, marbled, coliseum-style seats rise two stories. Brand approaches them. He walks up, up.

He catches sight of something...and sinks to his knees.

A large shadow grows on the steps, edging toward Brand. No definable form. Just a tremendous black shadow moving closer.

The shadow paints across his face. We do not see the source.

Brand is overcome. He won't face the shadow. Instead, he submits himself.

There's a long moment. Brand seems to be listening to...something. A couple beats and then...

A thick, aged scroll slips gently from the shadow. It bumps down a couple steps to Brand's knees. The shadow backs slowly away. Brand takes the scroll, looks up. He smiles, joyful.

A tremendous wind hits him. Sound and colors detonate all around, to a white-out.

CUT TO:

INT. SCORCHED GARDEN

Rebecca (now dressed) and Brett cautiously examine the mausoleum. They keep a distance.

REBECCA
Don't get too close.

BRETT
We're too close now!

REBECCA
One of us has to go down there.

BRETT
Whoever it is might not come back.

REBECCA
I can try.

BRETT
I don't think so.

REBECCA

Look, Jon could be injured or—

A major flash of light, from behind. They're both a bit shocked, and shield their eyes.

They turn.

Brand appears on the disk where Rebecca was earlier. He lays nude on his side, semi-conscious.

They run to him. Brett removes his sweater, wraps Jon. A bit of a useless move.

REBECCA (CONT'D)

Jon! Thank God!

Brand raises a single brow.

BRETT

Whole lotta nakedness goin' on
here. Jon, man, what happened?
Where were you?

Brand cradles the scroll. He manages to tie Brett's sweater around his waist, stands wobbly. Brett and Rebecca help.

BRAND

(composes)
How long...?

REBECCA

Two hours.

Brand stares forward.

REBECCA (CONT'D)

Where'd you go? What is that?

BRAND

I'll tell you guys all about it.
Later. Right now, I could *really*
use a coffee.

They move toward the trellis path. Brett and Rebecca walk ahead. Brand pauses to open the scroll. He ponders the runes for a second, smiles wide. He scans the garden, observes the platinum spectre. Brand exits.

INT. MAP ROOM

Brand climbs up through the map's center. The florescent rope is gone, replaced with an aluminum work ladder.

Brand hesitates, peers down a last time. Where the leaves once blew, now ashes. Brand pulls himself free. The instant he does this, the centerpiece slams shut.

They all sit, exhausted. Bhodal's body has been removed.

BRAND
Where's Bhodal?

BRETT
Dead. He was the rat, Jon. At the last minute he changed his mind. Grähm took him out.

Brand looks at Brett silently, shakes his head.

BRAND
Terrible. A waste.
(beat)
So I learned something new. When I took the last exit.

BRETT
The star thing?

BRAND
Look at the centerpiece. See it? This place is seven dimensions. Three we live in. Four here, with the centerpiece. Five is the garden. And the rest.

REBECCA
You sure? Seems like just three whole dimensions to me. Besides, what about time?

BRAND
Time is almost everywhere. Just different in other dimensions.

BRETT
Hah! Better call Einstein, baby! Seems a little off.

BRAND
Well...Einstein was way above everything. But 3D creatures, like us, pass through this box in some sort of...manifold. Or something. We still live three dimensions, all the time. Dimensions four, five, and especially six and seven are not even comprehensible to us.

(MORE)

BRAND (CONT'D)

With math stuff, maybe, or maybe a college theory paper. But there's a barrier to understanding.

(beat)

They're a billion years ahead of us. To build a cross-dimensional world? In a box? C'mon.

REBECCA

A billion years. I feel like a dot.

BRAND

Oh. Here. Have a look at this.

Brand produces the scroll. He unravels it, and another separate scroll detaches. He hands one to Brett that reveals equations and formulae. Brett takes the vellum and studies it. And he can't believe what he's reading.

BRETT

It's the formula for Nuclear Fusion. *Sustained* Nuclear Fusion. Man, this is like...the discovery of fire, or the wheel. This is gonna change everything!

REBECCA

Jon, how did you get this?

BRAND

Let's just say it came from a very high place.

BRETT

Human race gonna take a step. Overnight!

BRAND

We'll see. People get used to technology pretty quickly. But I guess it's a start.

BRETT

A *start*?! I guess electricity was a start, too.

Brett wanders off, lost in the secrets of the equation.

BRAND

We got work to do.

REBECCA

So what's the other scroll?

BRAND

Not sure. Looks like it'll need to
be translated. Probably just—

Brand is suddenly struck with dizziness. He falters, Rebecca
grabs him.

REBECCA

You okay?

BRAND

Get to a television.

REBECCA

Jon, just relax, and—

BRAND

Get to a broadcast, now! Streaming,
phone, whatever.

Rebecca is alarmed by his conduct. Brand sits, holding his
head in his hands. She looks around the room. The various
bits of equipment are still here.

REBECCA

Brett! Hey!

Brett wanders in from the dark.

REBECCA (CONT'D)

Something's wrong with Jon. He
keeps asking for a TV broadcast.

BRETT

Well, get the man a TV.

Brett pulls his iPhone, grabs a TV Channel. Rebecca returns
to Brand, hands him the phone.

REBECCA

What're you looking for?

BRAND

I don't know. I'll know when I find
it. There!

A news broadcast is heard, by a female anchor. They watch.

ANGLE OF: IPHONE SCREEN

A network news report comes alive. A lot of activity and
chaos in the station, as if reporting a major disaster.

FEMALE ANCHOR

Yes, Don, we see it. Can you get any closer for us? Okay, we'll wait for your feed. For those just joining us, let me bring you up to date. Um, at about 5:45 AM, the exact moment of sunrise, a giant... structure appeared near The Dead Sea, Israel. Don? Okay. Specifically in the Bein Harim area, the lowest point on earth, at fourteen-hundred and twelve feet below sea level. The structure appears to be a three-sided, black pyramid. We've got a report that it's metallic, but that's not confirmed. Don? Okay, we're getting ready for picture. Just a moment.

The anchor holds her ear, listening. She looks suddenly pale, in shock.

FEMALE ANCHOR (CONT'D)

Um. Ladies and gentlemen, we've just gotten a report from the Geological Survey of Israel team in the area.

The anchor seems frightened. She looks stage left.

FEMALE ANCHOR (CONT'D)

Is this for real?

She looks to the camera, starts again.

FEMALE ANCHOR (CONT'D)

Okay, as I was saying, an Israeli Government survey team has arrived and they report the following: the structure is not touching the desert or lake floor. It appears to be resting on a cushion of air. Also, they have a preliminary calculation of the structure's size. The base is thirty-three miles long on each side. Yes. And... One-hundred forty-four thousand feet high. That would mean it's partially in space, beyond earth's atmosphere. Almost five times higher than Mt. Everest. I think it's safe to say this isn't—

Brand cuts the transmission, a smile of deep satisfaction.

REBECCA

My God. Um, what exactly did you do, Jon?

BRAND

Don't know. But, I'm exhausted. And I feel more alive than ever. Weird.

(beat)

So, I've been meaning to ask you something.

Jon looks at Rebecca, their eyes meet. They savor the moment.

BRAND (CONT'D)

I was wondering if...

REBECCA

I know what you're thinking...and the answer is yes.

He raises a brow.

BRAND

Hey! You could at least let me ask.

They kiss.

CUT TO:

EXT. LA LOUVRE, FRANCE - NIGHT - ESTABLISHING

SUPER: THREE MONTHS LATER: LOUVRE MUSEUM - PARIS, FRANCE

INT. LOUVRE

A dark corridor, security guard walking. He shines his light to and fro, shows a few prized pieces.

He turns a corner, shines his light on a newly installed glass case. Inside is an inscribed, stretched scroll with which we're familiar.

A plaque beside translates the inscription to 10 languages, English being second. It presents the scroll as:

"WHEN YOU ARE READY, YOU MAY ENTER."

EXT. DEAD SEA - MORNING

Long shadows and the blaze of sunlight fall across blasted desert rock. Rising over the Dead Sea is the startling monstrosity of the black metal pyramid.

Its heavenward peak stabs the sky, clouds partially obscure its zenith. It is indeed hovering slightly from the desert.

And just a bit up one side is an obvious door, with no handle. Above is a bas-relief inscription, in Latin:

"CUM PARATUS FUERIS INERE POTES."

SUPER: WHEN YOU ARE READY, YOU MAY ENTER.

FADE TO BLACK:

THE END

SUPER: PROLOGUE - 44 YEARS EARLIER - THE OPENING

FADE IN:

EXT. COUNTRYSIDE ESTATE - DAYLIGHT - ESTABLISHING

A rather fabulous mansion sits against a rural backdrop. Skies of brilliant azure and cirrus frame it round.

INT. ESTATE

Two young BOYS, 8 and 10, sneak through the well-appointed home. They make faces at one another as they progress from hall to hall, seeming on military maneuvers.

SUPER: NORTHEASTERN US, 1982

The boys are distinctly dissimilar. The older one, Grähm, has radiant blue eyes and a spiky head of blonde-white hair; the other, Jonathan, is brunette.

They dash from an alcove, nearly felling a servant, PETERS, 65. They giggle and run.

PETERS

Here, now!

INT. ESTATE HALLWAY

Grähm and Jonathan have attained a particular hall where drafts of smoke ebb from a large salon. The AD-LIB voices of MEN are heard O.S., obviously in debate.

The two boys move to positions near the salon door, the chambers beyond in clear view: Perhaps 10 suited gentlemen sit and stand about the salon, with a neatly-bearded one, BENJAMIN BRAND, 35, taking the lead at the head of the room.

Benjamin downs a whiskey, and while pouring another, speaks.

BENJAMIN

None would debate the need for
caution in these tricky times. But
I must remind you that boldness
wins the day. Therefore, my company
will continue its trade with—

On this, both Jonathan and Grähm rush the smoky salon, scream like soldiers on attack. The men watch stunned as Grähm takes the centre of the room, yells and waves his arms in a taunt as Jonathan exploits a desk-bound cigar box, pulls three enormous stogies.

Grähm and Jonathan dash from the salon, still screaming.

BENJAMIN (CONT'D)

Grähm! Jonathan! What the devil's
going on here?! Boys!

The men sit silent, sort of stare at the exit. Beat.

Grähm's head suddenly appear around the door jamb, a silly look on his face.

GRÄHM

Bah!

With that, he's had the last word, and is gone.

The men burst to laughter. Benjamin crumbles as well.

EXT. BRAND ESTATE GROUNDS - DAY

Grähm and Jonathan sit in a quasi-secluded corner, puff hard on the stolen cigars. Grähm thoughtfully studies the burning end of his stogie.

JONATHAN

Do you see something?

GRÄHM
(slight UK accent)
I do.

Jonathan is puzzled by this, looks at his own cigar's cherry. He shrugs, has another puff.

JONATHAN
You're cuckoo, I think.

Grähm jumps up, but Jonathan remains seated. Grähm motions. Reluctantly Jonathan gets up, follows his older brother.

EXT. BRAND FARMYARD

A small farmyard around the east side of the estate. Chickens, a few cows and pigs, barnyard architecture.

Grähm makes way to a fenced-in chicken coop. He stands and stares at the coop, fingers in the chicken-wire. Jonathan joins him.

GRÄHM
Go inside. I won't be a moment.

Grähm runs away. Jonathan rubs-out his cigar, puts it in a pocket, opens the gate of the coop.

A couple chickens run forward, and Jonathan twists around quickly, closing the fence behind him. In doing, he gashes his forearm.

Jonathan handles the pain well. He sits, studies the wound. Jonathan becomes intense, closely examines the bloody tear in his flesh. With his fingers, he makes an agile assessment of the skin pattern, and its elasticity.

Jonathan traces the wound contour, like a physician might. He pushes the edges of the wound together. He smiles.

The gate opens beside him, and Grähm returns. Most of the chickens have re-entered the coop.

Grähm has with him a kerosene lamp, his cigar still lit. Jonathan sees the lamp, doesn't get it.

JONATHAN
But it's full daylight, brother.

Grähm motions Jonathan forward, they move inside the coop.

INT. CHICKEN COOP

Grähm and Jonathan ease into the structure, which is filled with dozens of noisy chickens of varied size and color.

With his lit cigar, Grähm sparks the kerosene lamp, tosses it deep into the coop.

JONATHAN

No!

The lamp hits the floor, bursts and immediately sets flame to the entire structure.

The chickens shriek in fear and death as Jonathan tries fruitlessly to save them.

Finally he runs from the blaze. Grähm exits as well, but walks at normal speed to join his brother at the gate.

Jonathan is shocked, intercepts Grähm as he walks toward him. They violently struggle, Grähm is knocked to the ground.

JONATHAN (CONT'D)

What have you done?! What's wrong with you?!

Grähm smiles diabolically.

GRÄHM

Jonathan, just think: Wouldn't it be grand to toss a lamp onto the whole world? People do suffer so. This would end it for them. End everything, in fact.

Voices O.S., from the house. Benjamin and several men rush up, AD LIB yells for water buckets.

Against the flamescape, Jonathan stares his brother down.

Fin.